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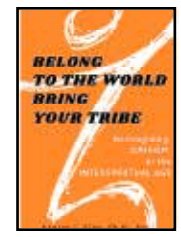

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WASHTENAW JEWISH NEWS

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Chabad of Ann Arbor to celebrate 50 years

By Dvora Schulman

On September 8, the Ann Arbor Jewish community will gather for a once-in-a-generation celebration: the 50th Anniversary Gala of Chabad House of Ann Arbor. Held at the historic Michigan Union, the evening event will honor five decades of vibrant Jewish life and the unwavering leadership of Rabbi Aharon and Esther Goldstein, who came to Ann Arbor in June 1975 at the direction of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson.

In a fitting tribute to their mission and the enduring vitality of the community they helped build, the final letters of a Torah written specifically for Ann Arbor will be completed at the Gala. Commissioned in honor of longtime supporters Florence and Marvin Gerber, this Torah — begun in a private ceremony at the University of Michigan stadium — marks the first Torah ever written in Ann Arbor.

Vintage photo of Rabbi Aharon and Esther Goldstein near rhe time of their arrival in Ann Arbor

A vision takes root

The seeds of Chabad in Ann Arbor were planted in the turbulent campus climate of the late 1960s and early '70s. Students were searching — for meaning, peace, and purpose. In response, the Lubavitcher Rebbe initiated a movement to establish Chabad Houses on university campuses. Rabbi Berel Shemtov in Metro Detroit purchased a former fraternity house on Hill Street on the Rebbe's birthday in the spring of 1975 in honor of the Rebbe's 25th year of leadership. He also renovated the building. A few months later, Rabbi Aharon and Esther Goldstein arrived.

"It was beautiful," Esther recalled of their arrival. "The air was so fresh. But where were the Jews?"

As it turned out, the road ahead wouldn't be easy. Initially met with suspicion, the Goldsteins slowly transformed neighbors into friends, skeptics into supporters. Rabbi Goldstein recalled, "My approach is to overcome confrontation with love. I never challenged. I smiled and invited them for Shabbos."

Building a community, one step at a time

Jewish tradition teaches that before building a synagogue, one must build a mikvah. True to that principle, one of Chabad's first milestones was constructing a mikvah, affirming the centrality of Jewish family life. The Hill Street building, previously damaged in a fire, was lovingly renovated — removing a fireplace in the middle of what would become the sanctuary — and rededicated as a place of learning, worship, and welcome.

Over the years, the Chabad House

Continues on page 5

Ann Arbor JCC welcomes new staff

By Drew Coel, Marketing and Program Associate, Ann Arbor JCC

Marci Sukenic

In the last several months, the Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor has brought on three amazing and talented individuals to join their team. They each bring unique experiences and talents to their work enhancing programming, establishing strong partnerships, and fostering connections throughout the Ann Arbor Jewish community.

Marci Sukenic, Director of Development

A well-known presence in the local Jewish community, Marci comes to the role of Development Director with strong relationships and a deep commitment to building connections that strengthen communal life. She previously served as the Manager for Women's Philanthropy at the Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor, where she focused on engaging donors and fostering meaningful community involvement. Her passion for relationship-building and collaborative work will be central as she begins this new chapter with the JCC.

"I'm thrilled to be joining the incredible team at the JCC," Marci shared. "While this is a new role for me, many of the faces I'll be working with are not. It's exciting to continue serving a community I care deeply about, while also building new relationships along the way." Dave Stone, Executive Director of the JCC, added that "Marci brings a strong connection to the Ann Arbor Jewish community which will translate nicely to her work at the JCC. She cares about the community and her passion for her work is already evident. I am excited about the future of our JCC, and I am certain Marci will help us achieve

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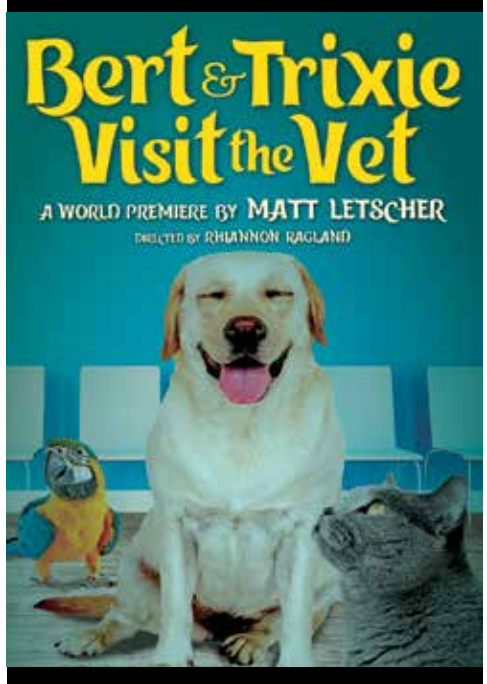

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From the editor

A prayer for the depths

Last month I introduced the idea of paid subscriptions for mailed copies of the WJN. I heard from a surprising number of readers, about 75% very willing to pay a small yearly fee to receive the WJN in the mail. I'm tending toward starting off with a "voluntary subscription," much like the *Dayton Jewish Observer* model. More specifics next month. Would still love to hear from you.

***

End of July doldrums of summer, heading to the depths of Tisha b'Av, this year on August 3. From Tisha b'Av to Rosh Hashana is 49 days, the echo of the Omer. I don't remember ever needing Tisha b'Av like I do this year. Can there be consolation when atrocities are ongoing?

As I often do, I turned to Rabbi Rachel Barenblatt, the Velveteen Rabbi for some Tisha b'Av thoughts. I found that in 2012 she posted a prayer for Tisha b'Av, written by Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi, a.k.a. Reb Zalman.

Reb Zalman z'l explains:

During the time before there was a State of Israel, those ideals in our hearts which we tried to practice and which we wanted others to practice seemed not achievable where we were because we felt we had no influence over our world where we were. And so, the longing for our homeland was tied into the longing for our dreams and our vision.

Now that the state of Israel is with us, our dreams and our visions still remain distant from our lives and therefore when we say the Tisha b'Av prayers, we remind ourselves of the distance between that which we would have in this world and that which we do have. ■

נחם י–ה אל–הנו	Comfort, Yah our God,
אבלי בית בחירתך	all who mourn your sacred house,
המתאבלים על מקרשיה.	who grieve the holy wholeness it contained.
נחם נא בכפלים המתלוננים	Comfort especially those who live most closely
בצל זכרונותיה,	in the shadow of its memory,
בין נציצי קדושתה	amidst the shattered sacredness of your Holy
שנפלו לשבירה.	City, the city of many names and owners;
נחם נא את יושבי עיר הקודש,	Yerushalayim,
עיר הבירה של מדינת ישראל,	Capital of the State of Israel,
ראשית צמיחת גאולתנו,	the beginnings of our redemption,
אל–קודש בת–עין השלשת נאמיה:	Al Quds, the apple of the eye of Palestine.
נא תשקט	Calm those who dwell in it
את חמתם	from their anger at each other
ואת פחדם מהתקפות.	and their fears of terrorism and repression.
נא תשפיע עליהם רוח חכמה והשכל	Give them the wisdom
לחוק אחד את רעהו לבנות אחד את חשני בשמות	to affirm each other's names
ובנויי הערצה.	and stories.
נא תעמוד בעזרתם להקים ממשלות	Help them to work for forms of government
השקם ובמח	through which each can keep safe its inner life
ויושר הדרי.	and meet its worthy needs.
נחמנו נא י–ה הא–ל הגדול הגבור והנורא	Comfort us Yah, Great God, awesome One,
בחזיון הקודש של בית תפילה	with that holy vision of the House of Prayer
לכל העמים.	for All Peoples.
תן בלבבנו	Place into all hearts
רגשי כבוד ואחות,	feelings of respect and kinship
דת ועם אחד אל חברו	of each people and creed for its counterpart.
וידעו כולם	May we all become aware
כי הם פעליך י–ה	that we are Your creation
ושאתה פעלתם ושכבודך נעתר	and that Your glory is exalted
על ידי שירים שונים	through diverse hymns
תמתיחדים במזמור שיר ליום שכולו שבת.	which form the harmonies to the Anthem of the Shabbat.
יהי רצון מלפניך	May it be granted us
שכל הנכנסים בשעריי עיר הקודש	that anyone entering the gates of the holy city
ירוו בנשמתם נחמה שלמה, נחמה בכפלים.	be fully comforted and doubly consoled.
ברוך אתה י–ה	We praise You,
מנחם ציון ובונה ירושלים,	who in consoling Zion builds Jerusalem,
עיר השלום	Ir Hashalom, the City of Peace,
וירושת העולם.	Yerushat Olam, the inheritance of all the world.

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Phone numbers, websites, and addresses of organizations frequently listed in the calendar:

Ann Arbor Orthodox Minyan (AAOM): 1429 Hill Street, 248-408-3269, annarborminyan.org

Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Congregation (AARC): 2935 Birch Hollow Drive, 734-445-1910, aarecon.org

Beth Israel Congregation (BIC): 2000 Washtenaw Ave, 734-665-9897, bethisrael-aa.org

Chabad House: 715 Hill Street, 734-995-3276, jewmich.com

Eastern Michigan University Center for Jewish Studies (EMU): www.emich.edu/jewish-studies/

Frankel Center: 202 S. Thayer St., lsa.umich.edu/judaic/

Jewish Community Center (JCC): 2935 Birch Hollow Drive, 745-971-0990, jccannarbor.org

Jewish Cultural Society (JCS): 2935 Birch Hollow Drive, 734-975-9872, jewishculturalsociety.org

Jewish Family Services (JFS): 2245 South State Street, 734-769-0209, jfsannarbor.org

Jewish Federation: 2939 Birch Hollow Drive, 734-677-0100, jewishannarbor.org

Pardes Hannah: 2010 Washtenaw Ave, 734-761-5324, pardeshannah.org

Temple Beth Emeth (TBE): 2309 Packard Road, 734-665-4744, templebethemeth.org

UM Hillel: 1429 Hill Street 734-769-0500, michiganhillel.org

Feature

Ayin Press feeds and seeds Jewish culture

Ayin Press is an independent publishing platform and interdisciplinary creative studio rooted in Jewish culture while reaching beyond traditional boundaries, and a recent grantee of the Jewish Liberation Fund.

Below is an edited transcript of a video interview titled "Writing as Activism: Ayin Press" uploaded on July 14.

The photograph shows Ayin Press' "Hamsa Flag," which envisions peace and shared humanity in Israel and Palestine, calling for an end to war and transcending borders and nations through its grounding in Andalusian and Levantine history.

Noa Barash [Jewish Liberation Fund]: Hi there. I am joined today by three incredible folks from Ayin Press. Penina Eilberg-Schwartz who's the managing editor, Talia Krevsky, development and partnership manager, and Tom Haviv, executive director and co-founder. Thank you all so much for being here with me today. Ayin Press has been transforming Jewish cultural expression since 2020. You amplify innovative Jewish ideas through books, digital content, and programming with a mission rooted in the belief that culture and creativity can heal and transform the world. You don't just publish books; you actively seek out work that crosses boundaries and challenges conventional thinking. So, tell everyone about your approach and how you see publishing as a tool for social transformation.

Tom Haviv: Ayin Press has always grounded itself in an interdisciplinary approach to publishing and culture making. From the very beginning we have seen our curatorial and editorial process as actively trying to engage with different disciplines and engage different fields, from the literary artistic fields of cultural production and output to scholarly and academic fields to community organizing and social justice fields. Of course, these are

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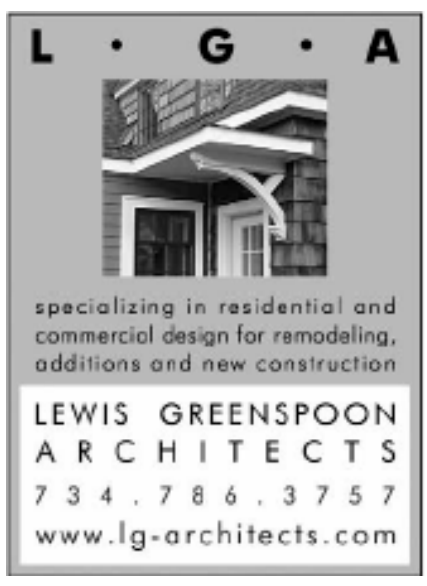

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August is "Make-A-Will Month"

By Osnat Gafni-Pappas

Although it may seem unusual to dedicate an entire month to estate planning, the reality is that most American adults don't have a will in place. Creating a will isn't just for the wealthy or elderly — it's an important step in planning for one's future and protecting the people and causes a person cares about. Here are several reasons why a will is relevant for everyone.

Decide Who Gets What

A will lets a person decide who gets their belongings.

Protection of Children

A will allows a person to name guardians for minor children instead of the court making that decision.

Prevent Family Conflict

A will can help prevent family conflict. When a person has a will, they choose who manages their estate and there's less room for confusion or disagreements after a death.

Leave a Legacy

A will lets a person continue supporting the people, causes, and institutions that have meant the most to them during their lifetime. They can designate charitable gifts, set up scholarships, or endow community programs, leaving a legacy that lives on even after they are gone.

Leave Instructions for Digital Accounts.

A will allows a person to name someone to manage their online accounts, like email, photos, or social media, and leave instructions for how they should be handled.

Care For Pets

A will ensures a person can choose who will care for their pets. They can name someone to take them in and even leave money for their care, so they're safe and loved.

Have Peace of Mind

Creating a will is an easy way to protect loved ones and make sure a person's wishes are followed. Knowing wishes will be honored brings comfort to loved ones.

This month is a great time to start writing or revising a will. The Jewish Community Foundation of Greater Ann Arbor, part of the Jewish Federation, can help begin and support the planning journey along with an estate attorney or financial advisor.

For those who already have a will, estate planning experts recommend reviewing it every few years or after major life events like moving, getting married, or welcoming children or grandchildren. It could only take 15 minutes this month to ensure a will is current and truly reflects a person's wishes.

The Greater Ann Arbor Jewish community is fortunate to be a part of the Life & Legacy® program, which helps people and families give back to the community through these 11 local Jewish organizations: Ann Arbor Orthodox Minyan, Beth Israel Congregation, Chabad House of Ann Arbor, Eastern Michigan University Center for Jewish Studies, Hebrew Day School of Ann Arbor, Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor, Jewish Cultural Society, Jewish Family Services of Washtenaw County, Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor, Temple Beth Emeth, and University of Michigan Hillel.

To learn more about how to use a will to support these organizations, please visit JewishAnnArbor.org/LifeAndLegacy or contact Osnat Gafni-Pappas at osnat@jewishannarbor.org or 734-773-3538. ■

Help build hope: Join Garrett's Space sixth annual fundraiser

When Julie and Scott Halpert lost their son Garrett to suicide at age 23 in 2017, they channeled their grief into action. Now, eight years later, their vision is becoming reality as Garrett's Space prepares to host its sixth annual fundraiser while celebrating a major milestone: breaking ground on its residential campus, a non-medical wrap-around support option for young adults struggling with depression and anxiety.

The Go4GarrettsSpace fundraiser will take place Saturday, August 23, at the Morris Lawrence Building on the Washtenaw Community College Campus from 6 to 9 p.m. Hundreds of attendees are expected to gather for an evening that promises to be educational, inspirational, and entertaining. It will feature light fare and refreshments, a silent auction, and programming that highlights the impact of this local organization.

This year's event holds special significance. In April, Garrett's Space broke ground on its residential center campus at its 76-acre Superior Township property, marking the beginning of a transformation that will bring in-person programming to struggling young adults this fall. The milestone represents years of planning and community support coming to fruition.

"The support we've received from this community has been overwhelming," said Scott Halpert, Garrett's Space Co-Founder and Board President. "Breaking ground feels like a promise we're making — not just to honor Garrett's memory, but to ensure that struggling young adults have a place to turn. Together, we're building a space of hope that will serve our community for generations to come." All funds raised at the event will benefit the organization's Wellness Programming and the creation of its residential campus.

The evening's program will reflect Garrett's Space's community-centered approach. Attendees will hear from young adults who have participated in the organization's Wellness Program, alongside performances by University of Michigan student a cappella group "Touch of Blue: New American Vocal Ensemble." The third annual "Spirit of Garrett" award will be presented to Ashley Oberheide and Linh Song, recognizing their contributions to Garrett's Space and other nonprofits in our community.

Two co-hosts will guide the evening. Returning host Mario Sulaksana, a Los Angeles-based composer and producer who was one of Garrett's closest friends, will lead the event alongside Sasha Gusikhin. Gusikhin, who is a recent University of Michigan graduate, will bring a unique perspective as executive director of the Aphasia Community Friendship Center of Michigan and founder of NeuroArts Productions, which uses arts to raise mental health awareness through a science-integrated approach.

The need for Garrett's Space's resources has never been more urgent. National surveys reveal that roughly half of high schoolers and young adults struggle with depression or anxiety, and approximately 15% are contemplating taking their own life. Young adults face a particularly challenging gap in mental health resources; They're often too old for youth services yet struggle to navigate adult systems independently.

For more than four years, Garrett's Space has been addressing this gap through free weekly Wellness Programming, serving young adults ages 18–28 as a supplement to individual therapy and psychiatric care. The groups provide peer connection, professional facilitation, and practical coping strategies in a judgment-free environment.

One former participant shared with their permission the program's impact: "Garrett's Space provided me a space to understand my mental health better and also feel comfortable talking about my struggles with mental illness in a space where I knew there would be no judgment towards me. Garrett's Space provided me with a support network that I hadn't found anywhere else."

The fundraiser will continue Garrett's Space's commitment to accessibility, with tickets available on a sliding scale including a "Pay What You Can" option. A silent auction will feature donations from dozens of local and regional businesses, while optional meditation and sound bath sessions at 9 p.m. offer attendees a chance to experience the mindfulness practices central to Garrett's Space's programming.

Go4GarrettsSpace is more than just a fundraiser. It's a celebration of a community commitment to mental health and a preview of the innovative care model taking shape in our area. To buy tickets, make a donation or sponsor the event, visit garrettsspace.org/go4-2025. ■

JCC new staff continued from page 1

our long-term vision."

As Director of Development, Marci will play a key role in advancing the JCC's 2030 Vision, a forward-looking plan to grow impact through expanded programs, strengthened facilities, and a more inclusive and accessible community experience. Her focus will be on building strong partnerships, supporting strategic growth initiatives, and helping ensure a vibrant and sustainable future for the JCC. Outside of work, Marci stays busy with her three children, balancing a full schedule of school, sports, and activities. Whether she's on the road to a practice or cheering from the sidelines, family life keeps her on the move.

Eva Kubacki

Sorrel Thomson

Eva Kubacki, Jewish Cultural Arts and Education Coordinator

Eva graduated from the University of Michigan this past May with a BFA in Art and Design and a Judaic Studies minor. Eva's senior capstone project was a community tallis weaving program, and she looks forward to bringing her enthusiasm for fiber arts, collaborative making, and Jewish community building to the JCC. Last summer, Eva worked as the Enrichment Specialist at the JCC's Camp Raanana, teaching art and music to campers of all ages. She is excited to continue bringing art programming to this community for all ages and creative experiences.

Sorrel Thomson, Director of Camp, Youth and Family

Sorrel is new to Camp Raanana, the Ann Arbor JCC, and Michigan entirely. He grew up attending JCC Camps and Habonim Dror Camp Galil in Greater Philadelphia. In the summer of 2024, he served as Assistant Director of Athletics at NJY's Camp Nah-Jee-Wah in the Pocono Mountains. With over 10 years of camp experience, Sorrel's favorite camp activities are playing knockout basketball, singing camp songs, and dancing to Israeli music. Sorrel's love for camp has always been so strong that even after his family moved to Southwest Florida, he continued to attend overnight camp at Galil and serve as a counselor as well.

Sorrel is passionate about education and recreation. In addition to all of his camp experience, he has experience with substitute teaching and Sunday school teaching in Southwest Florida and Temple Sinai in New Orleans, respectively. In 2024, Sorrel completed his Masters in Sport Business Management at the University of Central Florida in Orlando, with the hopes to apply the degree in community recreation and contribute to Jewish community work. ■

Chabad 50th Gala continued from page 1

evolved from a student-focused center to a multi-generational hub offering programs like Camp Gan Israel (CGI), the Torah Education Program (TEP), Chabad Hebrew School (CHS), and Jewish Learning Institute (JLI) courses. The Goldsteins' children, now grown with cildren of their own, returned to serve the very community that nurtured them. Rabbi Zalman and Shternie Zwiebel, along with Rabbi Alter and Chanchi Goldstein, expanded Chabad's reach to local families and university students alike.

"There are CGI camps all over the world, and I wanted our children here in Ann Arbor to have that same joy — a place to run, laugh, and feel proud to be Jewish," said Shternie Zwiebel, who founded Camp Gan Israel locally over 25 years ago. "We started small, and today we have over 100 campers. What moves me most is hearing from alumni — now parents themselves — who tell me that camp reached deep into their souls. Their kids are now singing the same CGI songs they grew up with, like 'I'm a Jew and I'm proud and I'll sing it out loud,' even in today's climate of rising antisemitism."

Adapting and thriving

Throughout the decades, Chabad of Ann Arbor has responded to both everyday needs and historic moments. During the COVID-19 pandemic, creative adaptations kept the community connected: Shavuot kits with all but the ice cream, Rosh Hashanah shofar blowing outdoors, and a drive-in Chanukah celebration featuring a giant screen and hot latkes.

And always, at its core, Chabad remained open to all. "We've never asked for affiliation or membership," said Rabbi Aharon. "Every Jew is welcome, wherever they are on their journey."

A Torah for this Time

The Torah project encapsulates the spirit of the past 50 years — rooted in tradition, inspired by love, and committed to the future. "The Torah is the bedrock of Judaism," said Rabbi Alter Goldstein. "Especially after the events of October 7 and the rise in antisemitism, writing a new Torah brings unity, protection, and spiritual strength to our community."

Opportunities for community members to dedicate letters or sections of the Torah remain open at Chabad50gala.com

Looking Ahead

The 50th Gala promises to be a joyful and meaningful evening, filled with reflection, a special video presentation, and the powerful moment when the final letters of the Torah are written. Rabbi Aharon and Esther Goldstein will be honored.

RSVPs are being collected on the dedicated website. Volunteers and lay leaders are working behind the scenes to ensure the evening reflects the warmth, energy, and inclusive spirit that have defined the Chabad House for half a century.

"We hope people leave the Gala uplifted, joyful, and inspired," said Esther Goldstein. "And that future generations look back on this moment and see what's possible when you build with love and faith."

As longtime community members Sassa and Jan Akervall shared, "We met Esther at a bar mitzvah nearly 20 years ago and instantly became friends — but more than that, the Goldsteins have been instrumental in our family's Jewish learning and growth. We're so grateful for everything they've done for us and for the entire community. Mazel Tov!"

Reserve your place now: Chabad50gala.com ■

Teaching Torah to our children

By Rabbi Aharon Goldstein, Chabad of Ann Arbor

Rabbi Aharon Goldstein

The Torah portion that we will read on Saturday, August 9, is Va'etchanan. It speaks about the mitzva of learning Torah, and contains the verse "... and you shall teach them to your children, to speak in them." In general, the mitzva of learning Torah consists of two separate commandments: the obligation each person has to learn Torah himself, and the obligation to teach Torah to others, especially one's children.

Although a person might naturally think that the mitzva of learning Torah oneself takes precedence over that of teaching others, we find that the opposite is true. Both Maimonides' writings and the Shulchan Aruch begin the section on the laws covering the learning of Torah with the duty each parent has to teach his children. Why is this the case? And furthermore, how can a person teach others before he himself is well versed enough in the subject matter?

We learn from the emphasis on teaching children the proper approach we must have when we begin to learn Torah, G-d's Divine wisdom and blueprint for the world. To understand this, let us examine the difference between Torah learning and the performance of mitzvot.

When a Jew does a mitzva he effects a change in the physical world, elevating and making holy the physical objects he uses in the mitzva's performance. The practical performance of the mitzva is therefore more important than the intentions and meditations of the person doing the deed, for the action itself serves to bring spiritual illumination into the world.

Torah learning, on the other hand, serves to refine and elevate the individual. When a Jew studies Torah his intellect becomes united with the G-dly wisdom contained in the Torah and causes him to be a G-dly person whose thoughts are those of holiness. The essence of learning Torah is therefore the humility and self-nullification one must feel before even approaching it to learn. In order to learn Torah properly one must have the sincere desire to understand G-d's wisdom without seeking self-aggrandizement or having other ulterior motives.

Before a Jew learns Torah he must subjugate his own ego and ask, what does the Torah itself want from me? Without this prerequisite, say our Sages, Torah learning can even be detrimental and become a "poisonous drug."

Emphasizing the duty to teach our children before we ourselves learn the Torah stresses that our goal is not merely the acquisition of knowledge, for the mind of a young child cannot possibly grasp the greatness of what they are learning. Our goal is, however, to cultivate and emulate the child's purity and innocence with regard to how they learn the Divinely written words. We must likewise approach the Torah in the same way, and not try to "fit" what we have learned into the preconceived, jaded view of the world we sometimes acquire as we grow older. All of us, no matter how old we are, are like young children to our Father in Heaven. ■

America's "Sabra and Shatila"

By Teddy Weinberger

The phrase "Sabra and Shatila" is immediately recognized by most Israelis as a war crime in which Israel was involved. Between September 16-18, 1982, during the Lebanese Civil War, hundreds of Palestinians were killed by a Christian militia. At the time, the Israel Defense Forces had control over western Beirut, including the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps. The IDF permitted the Christian Lebanese Forces to enter these refugee camps and kill terrorists who were hiding among the civilians, but the latter were also targeted.

As word of the massacre reached Israel, hundreds of thousands of Israelis gathered on September 25 in protest. On September 28, Prime Minister Menahem Begin agreed to set up an independent State commission to investigate the killings, and the Commission began work on November 1.

The Commission released its findings on February 7, 1983. While it did not find proof of direct involvement of the IDF in the Sabra and Shatila massacres, it did establish that a number of IDF officers were aware of the killings as they were happening and did not do enough to stop them. The Commission also issued recommendations of censure and sanction concerning these officers and concerning the government. Perhaps the most notable of these was its recommendation that Defense Minister Ariel Sharon end his tenure.

Sharon, though, refused to resign; a ruling by the government officially relieved him of his duties but allowed him to continue on as Minister Without Portfolio. Uri Dan, a reporter and confidante of Sharon's, made a statement at the time that was to prove prophetic: "Those who didn't want him as Defense Minister will get him as Prime Minister." This phrase is still alive today in Israeli culture as a black-humor caution concerning powerful people.

In 2022, when Israel observed the 40th anniversary of the massacres, there were plenty of murmurings on the left concerning the failure of Israeli society to fully come to terms with what happened at Sabra and Shatila. A lack of the availability of the complete historical record was decried, as well as the absence of creative artists taking up the matter (with the lone exception of Ari Folman's Waltz with Bashir, a highly regarded 2008 animated documentary depicting Folman's experiences as a soldier during the 1982 Lebanon War, including at Sabra and Shatila).

But my wonderful Israeli liberal friends, of whom I count myself a part: You do not know what it is to truly neglect a shameful episode in one's country's history. What if I were to tell you that a massacre of civilians took place in the late 1940s in South Korea that could have been prevented by the American military? And what if I tell you that the entire episode went largely unknown to Americans until this very year?

That we were made aware of the Jeju Massacre even this year is a stroke of sheer serendipity, owing solely to the fact that the Nobel Prize Committee for Literature chose to bestow its 2024 award on Han Kang, a South Korean writer. Though Han had already risen to international prominence in 2016 when she won the International Booker Prize for fiction for her novel The Vegetarian, her 2021 novel We Do Not Part was not picked up for translation until her fame was turbo-charged by the Nobel. It is in We Do Not Part, released in January 2025, that we learn about what happened on Jeju, an island off the coast of South Korea (part of the book's plot revolves around a project to memorialize the victims of Jeju). The context for the killings was the post-WWII breakup of Korea. The Korean Workers Party protested in Jeju against the division of the

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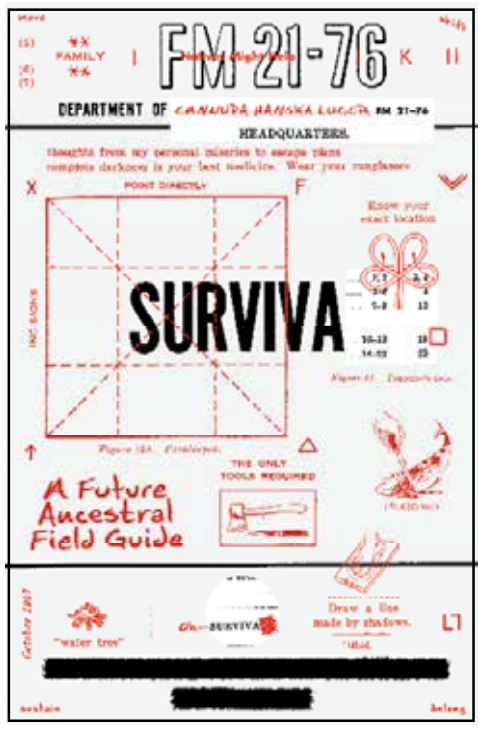
wide categories and there are other fields as well, such as theological spiritual work.

The siloization of these fields has limited some of the generative cross-pollination that we know is a fact of life and is the fact of people's individual experiences as Jews and as citizens and as participants in culture. Readers are, you know, co-creators. And so from the very beginning we were always thinking about how do we curate across a spectrum and make sure that people encounter a holistic and poly-vocal or multivalent approach to thinking about culture.

At the very beginning of our project, co-founder and editorial director Eden Pearlstein and I had three different pillars that were kind of like playful categories for how we were thinking about our curation. We thought a lot about what we called speculative theology, which was an orientation towards theology and spirituality that was open to emergence and to new ideas and to taking seriously those new ideas as part of a larger, ongoing expression of Jewish life and also spirituality beyond Judaism. The second and third pillars were political imagination and radical aesthetics. For political imagination we had imagined our relationship to social movements and to social justice also tending to the horizon of emergence, seeding different ideas, supporting people who were taking risks within the social justice space, supporting the cultural expression of certain social justice ideas and values, and also moving out of the fully operationalized or instrumentalized — the on the ground, you know, in the streets — version of activism. Political imagination was our expansive way of saying we want to publish on risk-taking, imaginative political thought and practice.



Third, radical aesthetics, may sound bland now because what does "radical" mean? It can mean anything. But I think the etymology of radical still is powerful being "at the root," looking at the root of different aesthetic ways of presenting Jewish life. We asked, how do we talk about aesthetics that is beyond just art as additive, but also art being at the root of how people see themselves in the world.

Noa: Those are all really important pillars. I'm excited to dive a little bit more into the work you do in each of those. You all have made a commitment to featuring voices that spark important conversations and really challenge the status quo. Can you walk us through your process for identifying and selecting boundary pushing authors and writers, and what has this taught you about the relationship between controversial ideas and meaningful change?

Penina Eilberg-Schwartz: One of the ways in which publishing is a kind of organizing is that it is deeply relational if it's done in an aspirationally liberatory framework. Ayin Press is very much operating in that way: we accept submissions from the public. We're a pretty small team so we're still figuring out how to read as much of the work as people want to send to us, which is amazing how much interest we've seen.

A lot of the identification of transformative thinkers has been through relationships. We're publishing out of the communities that we are a part of: Jewish communities and communities that gather around spiritual axes, around political organizing, around art, and also communities that of course expand beyond the Jewish framework. We are finding people who are saying things that feel deeply transformative and liberatory and important. Sometimes it means new ideas. Sometimes it means emphasizing something that people have been saying forever in a new way that has found a way to slip through the cracks of discourse that can tend to feel staid or broken or overly determined. So, through relationships we find there's definitely a connection between controversial ideas and change and resistance to change. So, ideas that are really meant to find a way through, to open up new possibilities for the future, to speak truth about violence, but also to

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speak truth about the interconnection of all things, of all beings, of the dignity and right to freedom and equality for all people — all of these important things that Jewish Liberation Fund community members are working towards — they raise resistance.

At Ayin, we're really interested in finding ways to identify those controversial ideas, but also to work with authors to bring them into registers that are the most likely to be effective. That's another way in which we're organizing. We're thinking the message is there, the message is true, but there are as many different ways to communicate an idea as there are ideas in the world. Artists get really creative about how we say something that might be controversial in a way that people might finally hear it, might finally listen. We're interested in artistic expression of controversial ideas both because it can be liberatory and radical and transformative, and also because art can make the controversial feel more immediate or possible or accessible.

Tom: I would like to add something to that, dovetailing on what you just said, Penina. In the DNA of Ayin, there's a very serious belief in the need for avant-garde work, for artistic or scholarly or intellectual or spiritual practice being part of the way we see cultural transformation, cultural shift happen. We see the pipeline of new ideas that make it to the mainstream change consciousness and political and social discourse on a large scale.

What Eden and I have found — as writers and artists ourselves — is that there's often people getting involved in social movements without understanding the roots of those social movements, the roots of the leaders who had formed the ideas, or the history around those ideas. We felt like part of those roots are in emergent, unpopular ideas— forget even controversial, they are ideas so unpopular that they're not even controversial because people aren't even talking about the ideas other than the few people who came up with them. And so, we actually believe that in order to have serious impact on the widest scale possible, we both have to be functioning as a distribution hub, a publisher, a platform that is bringing things to as many communities as possible. But also to work with, as Penina was saying, artists and thinkers and community leaders at the ground level before their ideas have even caught fire with the world, supporting and stewarding their intellectual, spiritual, and creative process so that they can have a longer-term impact. That also means revisiting work that's been out of print or that's been out of the discourse so people can follow those roots and have the lessons of how we create the cultural shift from the ground up and on our own terms.

Noa: So, going off of what you were just saying about centering perspectives that aren't even controversial because they're not even in the mainstream or being talked about, one part of your mission is really centering these often-silenced perspectives to reshape what's possible in Jewish publishing and activism. How does your work reflect that commitment — maybe some examples of that work — and what impact have you seen from prioritizing these voices?

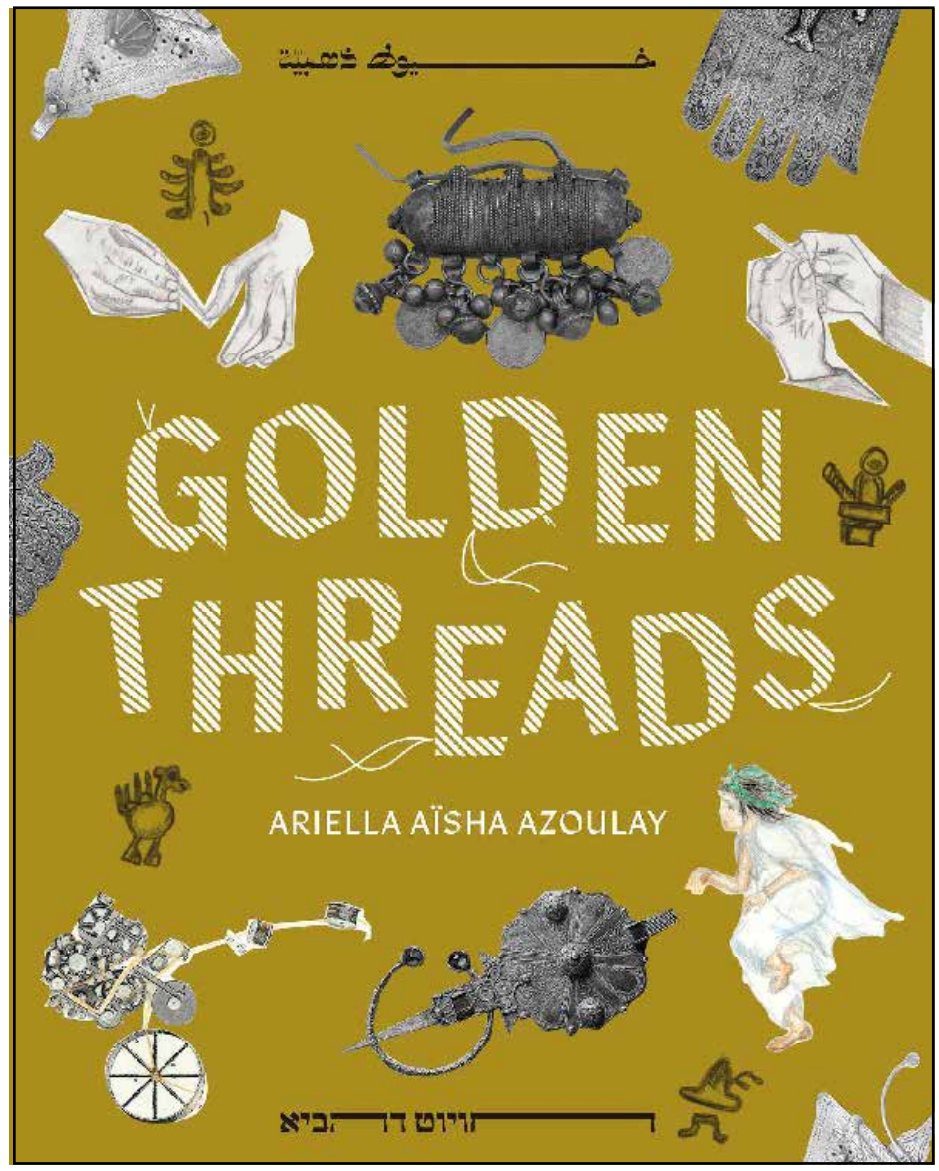
Penina: Since Ayin's founding, we've been prioritizing lifting up marginalized voices, stories, perspectives, avant-garde ideas and ways of being. There are lots of different fronts on which that's happening. We are especially committed to lifting up Levantine, Sefardi, and Arab Jewish perspectives; and cultures, histories, and thinkers who are critical of Israel or Zionism who are often not finding space in institutional Jewish containers. Also, queer voices. I can share a couple of projects that are examples of that kind of commitment. I'm thinking about Ariella Aïsha Azoulay's first kid's book, *Golden Threads*, which we published earlier this year, that draws on an historical instance of Jewish Muslim collective organizing in 1920s Fez and then uses that to inspire ideas about what might still be possible even though the world that the book's events happened in has been destroyed. I know that Ariela really wanted to write this book because she found that she didn't have such a book to read to her grandchildren that showed them where their family came from and also provided a template, a frame, for imagining the world that they still can and must create.

An example of Ayin's work on Zionism and Israel is Shaul Magid's *The Necessity of Exile,* which is having a pretty profound impact. It examines the costs of Zionism's attempt to erase the exilic thread in Jewish thought, political life, and culture, and serves as a powerful site of conversation including charged difficult conversations in the days after October 7 and as the destruction of Gaza accelerated.

One more example on the queer publishing front. I've had this short story of Jay Michaelelson's in my head for some weeks in which Michaelson imagines that one day everybody wakes up and Leviticus 18:22, one of the verses that prohibits queer sex, has just disappeared from all of the Torah scrolls in the world. In all these examples there's this imaginative thread that Tom has already spoken to that is key to our commitment to lift up these voices. We definitely see that expanding communities of people are looking for their reflection, for histories to delve into and to use as maps for imagining futures and inspiring political organizing. That imaginative piece of the work can sometimes fall to the wayside, especially in times of emergency like we're living through. But imagination is what creates the future, so it couldn't be more important.

Noa: Now I want to read all of those. So, switching gears a bit beyond traditional publishing you all have developed creative projects that function as tools for grassroots organizing. Can you tell us a bit about this work and how it functions as both artistic creation and cultural activism?

Tom: I think it goes back to looking at publishing in an interdisciplinary way. We don't look at publishing just books or articles on the internet. On one level we are publishing audio work, we're working on podcasts in context with traditional publishing. In addition, my work that has been woven into Ayin's work since the beginning, connected to the Hamsa Flag project, is definitely a more unorthodox way of thinking about publishing. Not everyone thinks about printing flags, but the Hamsa Flag project is a publishing and dissemination project. That project was born out of a question about how nationalism and Zionism function in Jewish identity, and is part of a conversation with my Sefardi ancestors and heritage. Going back to what Penina was saying about imaginative acts that help us envision and landscape possible futures, the Hamsa Flag functions primarily as an artistic intervention that didn't necessarily have a specific outcome, but was designed to raise questions about how flags, as markers of collectivity, function. To inquire into what markers of collectivity like a flag, like a hamsa, like a pomegranate, like a fig could signify about other forms of collectivity that could be more inclusive, that could be more horizontal, that can include Jews and Palestinians or Jews and Muslims or different kinds of identities in diaspora and not. The Hamsa Flag was printed in connection to my own book of poetry, *A Flag of No Nation*, that was connected to some oral history work I did with my family, my Turkish Jewish side of the family, and also connects to social movement spaces like Jews for Racial and Economic Justice (JFREJ), Standing Together, and If Not Now, helping think about other ways of speaking about collectivity and Jewish identity that could be connective across identity lines and ethnic lines.



There are a couple other projects that I would like to mention. One is Toratah, which means "Her Torah," and it's the re-gendering of the Old Testament in Hebrew and English. That project is being led by two women, Yael Kanarek and Tamar Biala, and they are basically creating a community around this work so it functions not just as publishing a book, but also like an anchor into the real world of community practice.

So, as with the flag, books function as community shapers and they function as ways of creating foundations for real world interactions.

Just to round this out, even the way we publish books is to think about them in a holistic sense, and not in a consumerist sense in which people read the books and walk away and that's entertainment.

We ask, how do we seed enough cultural work that we start to see people in community, in synagogues, in other kinds of organizing spaces start to have a library of books and other kinds of cultural tools to open up other possibilities?

To engage with Ayin Press's vision, visit their website, ayinpress.org ■

Hebrew Day School launches music and art studio initiative

By Orit Aviran

Hebrew Day School of Ann Arbor is seeking support for a dedicated Music & Art Studio designed to provide a permanent home for the artistic and musical expression of students from its Gan (kindergarten) through fifth grade.

The initiative comes on the heels of the school's successful 50th anniversary celebrations and the completion of the Anna Schwalb Memorial Library. As enrollment reaches 70 students this year, the need for dedicated arts space has become increasingly apparent.

"Until now, our music and art classes have taken place wherever space was available, often under time constraints and logistical limitations," explained Head of School, Rav Will Keller.

The momentum for a dedicated studio built throughout this past year. The school held its first-ever art fair, which drew enthusiastic crowds from across the community and showcased students' remarkable creativity.

The school has a rich history of graduating students who pursue creative careers. Notable alumni include brothers Ari and Robert Axelrod, both of whom were recently honored as Distinguished Alumni at the school's 50th anniversary gala.

The new studio will serve multiple functions within the school's dual curriculum approach. Beyond housing weekly music and art classes, it will provide a rehearsal space for the school's vibrant student Klezmer band and enable expanded programming that integrates creative expression with Jewish learning.

"This studio will elevate our already strong arts programming and position Hebrew Day School as a leader in comprehensive educational excellence across all disciplines — academic, communal, and cultural," noted Keller.

The studio project builds on Hebrew Day School's long-standing commitment to comprehensive education that prepares students academically while fostering strong Jewish identity and creative expression.

The school is seeking support to fund a renovation to create proper acoustics and storage, essential infrastructure including utilities for art activities, and the acquisition of quality instruments and supplies designed for years of student use. Additionally, programming support will enhance curriculum offerings and bring guest artists to campus.

Community members looking to support the initiative have several options, with naming opportunities available for those seeking to honor a loved one in a lasting way.

For those interested in supporting the Music & Art Studio initiative, contact Development Director, Tamar Jacobson, at tjacobson@hdsaa.org or visit hdsaa.org for more information about Hebrew Day School of Ann Arbor. ■

JCLP introduces class of 2027

By Kristina Riemer

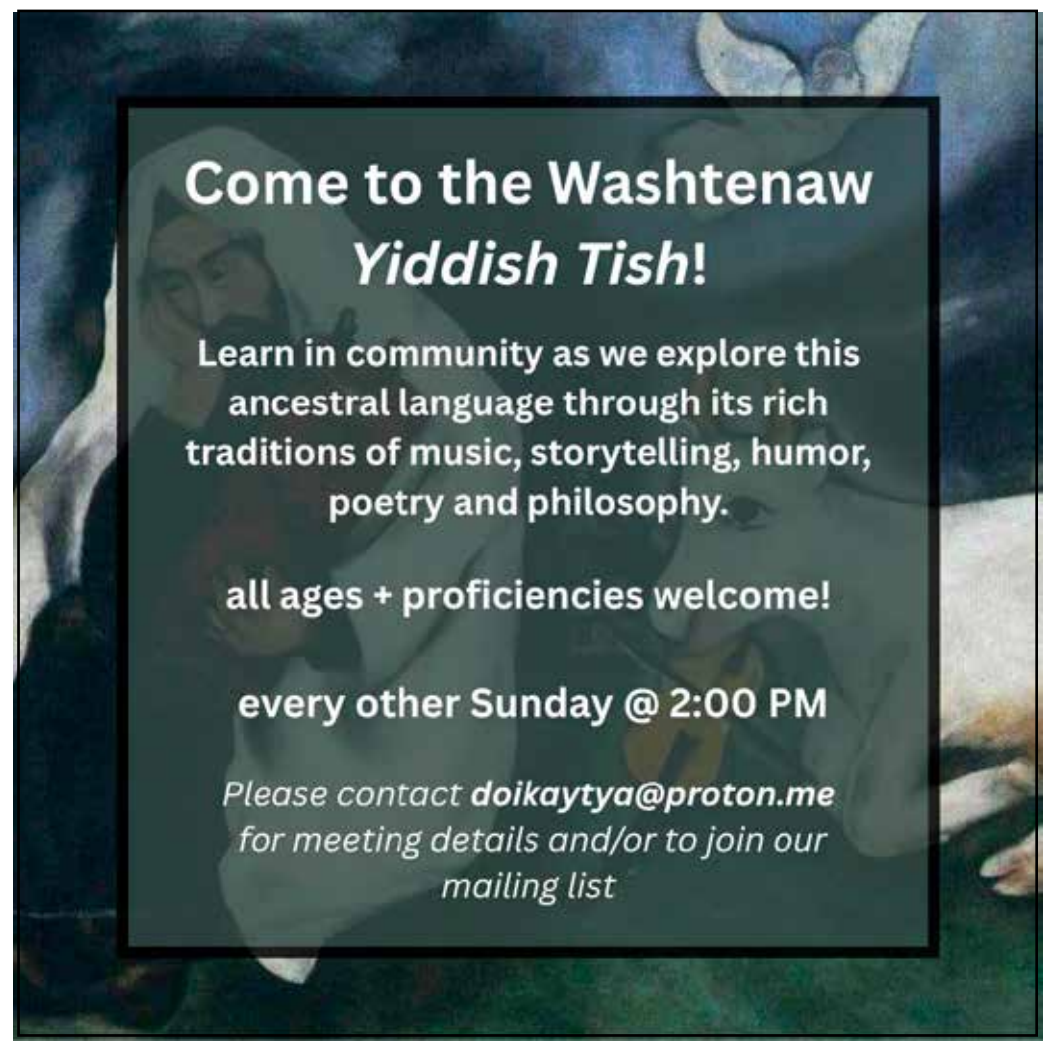
The Jewish Communal Leadership Program (JCLP) is set to welcome its newest cohort, the class of 2027, to the Ann Arbor Jewish community. JCLP is a unique program offering a dynamic education for emerging leaders who are passionate about supporting Jewish communities as they navigate the evolving challenges of 21st-century Jewish and North American life. Based in the University of Michigan (U-M) School of Social Work, JCLP provides students with rigorous academic and hands-on professional training in social work as Masters of Social Work and a demanding certificate in Jewish Communal Leadership in coordination with U-M's Frankel Center for Judaic Studies. JCLP also values its deep relationship with the Ann Arbor Jewish community — inviting local members to participate in public events and providing student interns for local community organizations.

This year, six incoming students will bring new diverse perspectives and experiences to JCLP and to the broader community. As usual, JCLP will be kicking off the new academic year by hosting its annual Community Welcome Breakfast. Table conversations facilitated by JCLP students offer community members and university staff and faculty an opportunity to connect with new and returning students and with each other. This year's breakfast offers an opportunity to create community at a challenging time and to prepare for the year ahead. Community members are warmly invited to this year's breakfast (catered by Amanda's Kitchen) on Monday, August 25, from 8 to 9:30 a.m. This year the breakfast will be held at Congregation Beth Israel, 2000 Washtenaw Ave. in Ann Arbor. Please RSVP at https://myumi.ch/E865M by Monday, August 18.

The JCLP Class of 2027 Cohort comprises Niv Fisher-Pinsker (Ann Arbor, Michigan), a recent graduate of Indiana University Bloomington with bachelor's degrees in Jewish Studies and Clinical Psychology; Hava Goldman (Westchester, New York), a recent graduate of the University of Delaware with a bachelor's degree in Human Services; Morgan Hesse (Brooklyn, New York), a graduate of Oberlin College and recent preschool teacher in Ann Arbor; Jacob Keer (Los Angeles, California), a graduate of the University of California, Los Angeles, who will be returning from a year spent teaching English in Spain; Benjamin Lyth (Holt, Michigan), a graduate of Yale Divinity School and an interfaith chaplain; and Rhyan Orenstein (Milwaukee, Wisconsin), a graduate of Goucher College and recent Springboard Jewish Education Fellow at University of Georgia Hillel. The incoming students are already beginning to find their roles in the local community. Rhyan Orenstein will be starting an internship at the Jewish Federation of Ann Arbor in September. Niv Fisher-Pinsker and Benjamin Lyth will begin their field placements at Jewish Family Services of Washtenaw County. ■

A new Yiddish tish

Yiddish Tish (or Yiddish Table) is a biweekly study group open to anyone with an interest in learning about the rich traditions of Yiddish culture, language and history. We have free-form discussions about a wide range of topics, from children's music to exorcist incantations to our own family memories. We try to make sure materials have English translations wherever possible, so no prior knowledge of the language is required! All are welcome regardless of how you identify. Please reach out for location information and/or to be added to our email list for future updates. ■



AARC "Year of Water" flows along

By Emily Eisbruch

When Rav Gavrielle Pescador, the spiritual leader of the Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Congregation (AARC), announced the congregation's "Year of Water" in early 2025, congregants were intrigued. "It sounds promising," was the common sentiment.

"Water, a symbol of life, renewal, and transformation, flows through the heart of Jewish tradition," said Rav Gavrielle. "From the waters of creation to the parting of the Red Sea, from the tears of prayer to the ritual immersion in the mikveh, water shapes our most sacred stories and practices, and reminds us of the ever-changing yet enduring essence of faith and community, which connects us to each other, the natural world, and the Divine. Focusing on the life-giving power of water also alerts us not only to its spiritual significance, but to our responsibility: to protect this precious resource in the face of a growing climate crisis. As it is written, 'May justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like a mighty stream' (Amos 5:24)."

In the past few months, the theme of water has animated and enlivened many AARC activities, such as the inclusion of blessing Miriam's Cup at the end of each prayer service and highlighting water references in Shabbat liturgy.

In June, Rav Gavrielle led congregants and interested community members in an outdoor minyan and river walk at Gallup Park. She drew from the Zohar, a foundational text of Jewish mysticism, which speaks of spiritual companions walking through nature as they explore sacred teachings. Inspired by this, Rav Gavrielle invited participants to reflect on the Huron River not only as a landscape feature, but also as a spiritual companion.

The prayerful walk included a focus on traditional morning liturgy infused with rich water imagery and references from roke'a ha'aretz al hamayim (blessing the One who spreads the earth over the waters) to a Kohenet interpretation of Mi Chamocha (The Spirit is Flowing) which reimagines the traditional view of God's miraculous splitting of the Red Sea not as a dramatic, forceful event, but as a gentle opening — a shift from resistance to flow.

In addition to traditional liturgy, the service included secular chants and songs such as "Into the River" (by Starling Arrow) and "Bridge Over Troubled Water" (by Paul Simon). Participants also joined together in Mayim, the popular Israeli circle dance and song. They danced while singing the text from Isaiah about drawing from the waters of salvation in celebration of joyful embodiment of communal connection to the ancient Jewish understanding of water as life, renewal, and Divine presence.

Participants in an AARC outdoor minyan and river walk.

Rav Gavrielle also shared the story of the prophet Elisha healing the bitter waters of Jericho (2 Kings 2:19–22), a powerful metaphor for transformation and restoration. Just as Elisha threw salt into the polluted spring to make its waters pure and life-giving, we are called to be agents of healing — both for our environment and for ourselves.

The experience was further enriched by interfaith traditions, with Buddhist teachings and chants shared by Kathleen Ivanoff, a former Dharma teacher of Ann Arbor's Jewel Heart community, to deepen awareness of water as a universal symbol of compassion, mindfulness, and healing.

According to AARC community member Lori Lichtman, "In a world filled with pain, suffering, and disconnect, we sang prayers and intentions for the water, connecting to the gifts of the water, each other, and ourselves. It was so peaceful and uplifting! Thank you, Rav Gav, for bringing this ritual to our community!"

Rav Gavrielle is hoping to offer two more walking tours before the high holy days.

The AARC is a caring, inclusive, and music-loving community of people who want to practice and study Judaism — or simply be around people who share a commitment to Judaism's values. The AARC's spiritual leader, Rav Gavrielle Pescador, is known for her warmth, her collaborative spirit, and her incredible voice and harp playing. You are invited to visit https://aarecon.org/ or email info@aarecon.org to learn more about the Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Congregation.

AARC Events for August

August 9

Meditation led by Anita Rubin-Meuller, 10–10:20 a.m. Meditation is followed by a hybrid Shabbat Service led by our Rabbi, Gabrielle Pescador, at the JCC and on Zoom. Zoom link will be sent out the week before the event. 10:30 a.m.–noon.

August 22

Fourth Friday Kabbalat Shabbat. This is a hybrid service led by Rabbi Gabrielle Pescador in person at the JCC and on Zoom. Everyone is welcome! Followed by a nut-free potluck Oneg. 6:30 p.m.

August 24

Rosh Chodesh Elul morning service on Zoom. 10 a.m. ■

Kosher Cuisine

Let's get corny

By Lonnie Sussman

Why do the seagulls fly over the sea?

Because if they flew over the bay, they would be bagels. (groan)

What do you call a fish with no eyes?

Fsh. (okay, enough)

It's late summer and the corn "is as high as an elephant's eye" and aside from wars and politics, it's been a lovely and bountiful summer full of fresh vegetables and fruits. I love to make food for the seasons and corn, squash, and beans seem to grab my interest and taste buds.

Three Sauces for Corn on the Cob

Vegetables Unleashed by Jose Andres

Makes enough for 4 ears of corn.

I love Michigan fresh corn. In my humble opinion, the best way to eat it is to fill a large pot with water and turn on the burner. Then go out to the field and pick the corn, remove the husk and if the water is boiling, put the cobs in the water for about 3–5 minutes. Butter and salt and maybe pepper and napkins.

In case you want to try some other ways, here are three possibilities.

Creole Remoulade Corn

⅓ cup mayonnaise
1 tbs Dijon mustard
1 tsp fresh lemon juice
1 tsp chopped parsley
1 tsp hot sauce
1 tsp chopped capers
You can also add some green onions, chopped, and a little salt. Slather on the cob and enjoy.

Sesame-Yogurt Corn

½ cup Greek style yogurt
2 tbs tahini
½ tsp salt
1 tbs fresh lemon juice
1 tbs za'atar, if you like
Slather on the cob and enjoy.

Miso Butter

4 tbs butter at room temperature
2 tbs white miso
1 tbs furikake
Slather on the cob and enjoy.

Cornbread

The Friendly Vegan Cookbook by Toni Okamoto and Michelle Cehn

Serves 10

I found this book at the Farmers' Market in Kerrytown. I think they were giving it away. There are plenty of corn bread recipes made with dairy products. This one is vegan.

2 tbs ground flaxseed meal
¼ cup plus 1 tbs water
1 cup all-purpose flour
1 cup cornmeal
1 tbs plus 1 tsp baking powder
½ cup granulated sugar
1 tsp salt
¼ cup canola oil
1 cup unsweetened plain soy milk
¼ cup corn kernels — fresh, since it's summer, but frozen or canned are also okay.

Preheat the oven to 425 degrees and lightly grease an 8-inch iron cast skillet or cake pan.

Use a small bowl and whisk together the flaxseed meal and water and set aside for 5 minutes. Use a large bowl and combine the flour, cornmeal, baking powder, sugar, and salt. Add in the ¼ cup of fresh corn (or frozen or canned). Add the canola oil, soy milk, and flaxseed meal mixture into the large bowl and mix by hand until well combined. Pour the batter into the prepared skillet or pan and bake for 20 minutes. Check if it's done by using a toothpick: if it comes out with batter, bake an additional 5 minutes. Allow to cool for about 30 minutes before serving.

Zuni Stew

The Greens Cookbook by Deborah Madison

Serves 6.

You know what would go great with cornbread? A stew with squash, beans, and corn. The cookbook was written back in the 1980s where the Greens Restaurant in San Francisco was a popular eating place. I had the pleasure of eating there once a long time ago. Sadly, the restaurant closed in 2024. At least we have some of their recipes.

The inspiration for the stew, according to the cookbook, came from a book on Pueblo Indian culture. Corn, beans, and squash were known as the "Three Sisters" and planted together, and with this recipe, eaten together. They were planted together as the pole beans grew up the stalks of the corn and the squash plants helped keep the weeds from coming up.

1¼ cups dried pinto beans soaked in water with the salt, bay leaf, and oregano. Cook for about 1½ to 2 hours. Drain but save the broth.
1 tsp salt
1 bay leaf
1 tsp dried oregano
1 pound of tomatoes, fresh or canned, peeled, seeded, and chopped, but save the liquid.
2 ancho chiles (or green peppers if you can't take the heat)
1 pound of mixed summer squash
4 ears of corn to cut off the kernels into 2 cups
1 tsp cumin seeds
½ tsp coriander seeds
2 tbs vegetable oil
2 yellow onions, cut into ¼ inch squares (or just chopped into medium size pieces)
2 cloves of garlic, finely chopped
2 tbs or more of red chili powder (or according to your taste)
8 oz green beans, cut into 1-inch lengths
Half a bunch of cilantro leaves, roughly chopped (I know, those who can't eat that, use parsley)

Prepare the tomatoes or use pureed charcoal-grilled tomatoes. Open the chili pods and remove the seeds and veins, then cut the chilis into narrow strips. Cut the squash into large pieces, shave the kernels from the corn. Grind the cumin and coriander seeds into a powder in a spice mill or with a mortar and pestle. (Hint, use cumin and coriander powders! But fresh ground would be better.) Heat the oil in a large skillet and sauté the onions over high heat for 1–2 minutes. Lower the heat, add the garlic, chili powder, cumin, and coriander, and stir everything together. Add a little of the bean broth, so the chili doesn't scorch or burn. Cook until the onions being to soften, about 4 minutes, then add the tomatoes and stew them for about 5 minutes. Stir in the squash, corn, green beans, and the chili strips along with the cooked beans and enough broth to make a slightly wet stew. Cook slowly until the vegetables are done, about 15–20 minutes. Taste and adjust the seasonings. You can add grated cheese if you like and add in the cilantro or parsley.

Charred Corn, Kale, and Sweet Potato Salad

A Modern Way To Eat by Anna Jones

Serves 4

4 sweet potatoes, peeled and roughly chopped
1 tsp smoked paprika (although I don't love the smoked paprika so I use sweet paprika)
½ tsp cumin seeds
1 tsp honey, (heat it up so it's runny)
Olive oil, salt, and pepper to taste
½ pound kale, stripped from the stems, and chopped into bite-sized pieces
Juice of 1 lime
2 corn cobs
1 ripe avocado, peeled, pitted, and sliced
Dressing:
Juice of ½ lime
Handful of cashew nuts
½ a bunch of fresh cilantro (again, up to you)
2 tbs coconut milk

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Place the sweet potatoes on a roasting tray with the paprika, cumin, honey, a good splash of olive oil, and some salt and pepper; this is where you chose how much oil, salt, and pepper to use. Toss everything together and roast until soft on the inside and charred and caramelized on the outside. This may take up to 40 minutes. Place the chopped kale in a large bowl, squeeze the lime juice on top, and add a pinch of salt. Use your fingers to massage the kale and distribute the lime juice and salt.

Use a griddle pan or cast-iron pan and turn up the heat to high. Add the corn cobs and char on all sides. Let them cool then cut the kernels from the cobs and add to the bowl with the kale. Use a blender to mix all the ingredients for the salad dressing along with 2 tbs of water and another pinch of salt. Blend until almost smooth and green. Taste and add more lime juice or salt if needed. Add the sweet potatoes to the kale and corn and add the sliced avocado. Pour the dressing over the top and toss everything together.

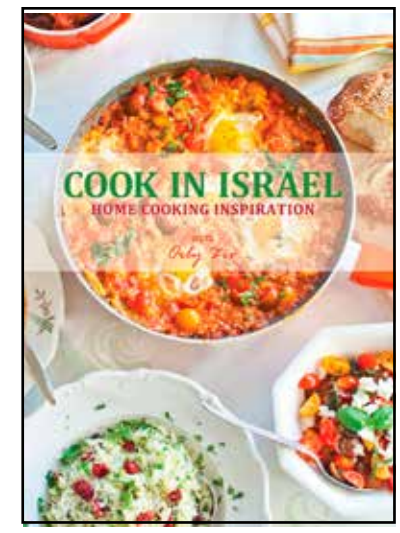
Bukharan Chickpea Pastry

Cook in Israel by Orly Ziv

Serves 4–6.

This recipe has nothing to do with corn. However, we are thinking of our family and friends in Israel. Our friend, Ofra, brought us this cookbook on her last visit here. Sadly, it's been a few years now, since travel from Israel has been difficult. We hope to see her in person in the coming year. This recipe is another version of sombusak, an Iraqi pastry. One of the differences is this version is baked, not fried.

1 onion, chopped
Olive oil
2 tsp black mustard seeds
2 tsp ground cumin
1 tsp salt
1 tsp turmeric
2 cups cooked or canned chickpeas, mashed
1 30x60-cm sheet of puff pastry or about 3–4 sheets of phyllo dough, each sheet brushed with melted butter or olive oil.
1egg, lightly beaten



Sesame or nigella seeds

Fry the chopped onion in a pan with a little olive oil and spices until the onion is caramelized. Remove from the heat and add the chickpeas and mix well. Preheat the oven to 400 degrees. Unroll the dough and divide in half. Spread the chickpea and onion mixture evenly over both pastry halves. Roll each lengthwise into a log and place on parchment paper-lined baking sheet. Brush the tops of the dough with the egg and sprinkle the sesame or nigella seeds on top. Bake for about 20 minutes or until the top is golden brown and crisp. Cut into slices. Want to make this even tastier? Make a tahini sauce by whisking together ½ cup of tahini with ½ cup buttermilk. Add some fresh lemon juice to taste. The sauce should be very smooth and very thick.

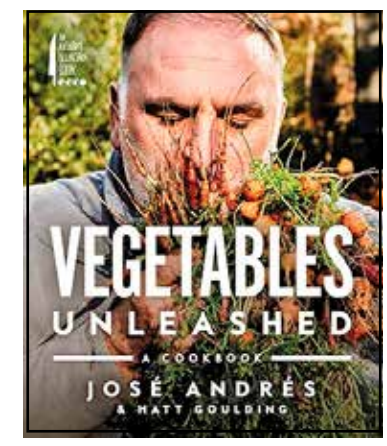
Poppy Seed Cookies

This recipe came via our friend Linda's mother-in-law, Bernice Jacobson, z"l. I looked for corn-related desserts but decided these cookies are a better idea. My husband calls them "Auntie Nelly cookies" as she used to bring them to family gatherings. This recipe will yield 80 2.5-inch cookies so you can freeze them whenever you need a quick snack or visitors surprise you.

1 cup sugar
¾ cup canola oil
¼ cup orange juice
2 eggs
4 cups flour
1 tsp baking soda
1 tsp baking powder
½ cup poppy seeds
Cinnamon and sugar for sprinkling on the top of the cookies.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees

Mix the sugar, oil, orange juice, and eggs together. Add the flour, soda, and powder. Mix well. Stir in the poppy seeds and then roll out the dough. Use a cup or glass to cut the dough into circles. Place on cookie sheet. Bake 10 minutes until crispy. ■



Restaurant review

Find out why Thompson's Pizzeria is always busy

By Candace Bulkley and Trina Fuller

Candace and Trina became friends in the Temple Beth Emeth adult b-mitzvah class that graduated in 2022. They will be honing their palates, visiting, and writing about a variety of independent, locally owned Washtenaw County restaurants, catering to a variety of dietary preferences.

Pizza is considered one of the most popular foods globally. Enthusiasts will passionately debate about where to find the best version. Washtenaw County has no shortage of pizzerias — most are takeout or delivery shops. There is something special about sitting down in an old-style pizza parlor and enjoying a pie, fresh and hot out of the oven sans cardboard box.

Thompson's Pizza, in Chelsea, which was established in 1970 and under new family ownership since 2002, has loyal legions of fans who have urged us to visit for quite some time. We set out early on a Thursday evening to put their pizza to the test and arrived to find a full parking lot, a good sign! Luckily, we were able to grab one of the last available booths, and settled in with great anticipation.

It wasn't long before our visibly busy — yet still friendly — server stopped by to greet us and take our drink orders. Thompson's has a full bar but we opted for soft drinks on this occasion. The menu, we discovered, offered much more than pizza. Fried pickles immediately caught our attention from the appetizer list and were ordered as we studied the menu. Described as "fresh and hand dipped in homemade batter," the pickles arrived piping hot and disappeared quickly along with the accompanying house-made ranch dressing. The batter was crispy and clung onto the briny pickle chips. By the looks of the small pool of oil at the bottom of the basket, the golden discs could have been left longer to drain excess oil from the fryer. Next, we ordered a basic tossed salad to share, which arrived as described. The lettuce was crisp and the vegetables were fresh, but the addition of bagged shredded cheddar cheese in the mix was unnecessary. If pizza isn't your thing, there are seven other entree style salads to choose from on the menu, including the always popular Traverse City Cherry.

Thompson's offers traditional American and Detroit styles of pizza. No details could be shared about any of their well-guarded recipes or local suppliers. We were assured the pizza dough and tomato sauce (made with California tomatoes) are freshly prepared each day. The meat is also sourced locally and delivered every morning. Our foursome ordered a traditional round pizza with mushrooms and ground beef, and interestingly, we were offered fresh or canned mushrooms — we chose fresh. Wondering if they could successfully prepare both styles of pizza, we ordered a Detroit style pizza with mushrooms, green peppers, and onions as well. In addition to standard pizza toppings, the menu offers several tasty sounding specialty pizza combinations including spinach and artichoke, and chicken pesto. A gluten-free cauliflower crust is available as well. From the extensive sandwich and burger selection, we chose the Smokey Submarine sandwich. With our order placed, we now noticed the dining room was filled with large groups of families with children, friends having a beer after work, and a handful of early-bird diners, giving Thompson's the feeling of a real community gathering place.

We were expecting a long wait for our food but surprisingly our meals arrived relatively quickly. The traditional round pizza tasted very good. The flavorful butter and garlic brushed crust held up well to plentiful toppings and the fresh tasting, not too acidic tomato sauce. The cheese pull was picture perfect and looked worthy of a TikTok video. On the other hand, the square Detroit style pizza fell short of expectations. Despite being cooked in a blue steel pan, which is known for creating a golden crust and crispy cheese along the perimeter, it was undercooked. The crispy cheese and golden crust were nowhere to be found. The robust tomato sauce was perfect and applied on top of the cheese as the style dictates, and the vegetables were fresh and plentiful. This interpretation of Detroit-style was reminiscent of the thicker and doughy Sicilian style pie. We brought the leftovers home in hopes that reheating the next day would crisp up the crust, which it did and was much more enjoyable.

However, the surprise standout was the Smokey Sub — filled with crispy chicken, lettuce, tomato, and honey mustard, melded together with a blend of cheese, it made for a knockout combination. The outstanding sub roll tasted so fresh and delicious that we speculated it was made from their own pizza dough, but we were told, no, that it came from a Detroit bakery, unnamed — another guarded Thompson's secret! Served with hot french fries, this dark horse selection was big enough to share between the four of us and worth the drive on its own. Better yet, we envisioned a future bike ride on the B-to-B trail with a finish at Thompson's for sandwiches to fill the personal tank before the ride home.

As we were wrapping up our meal, we asked our server if there was a reason for the early crowds — a senior special or early-bird discount perhaps? She said no, that's just the way it always is. Thompson's Pizzeria is definitely a solid choice for pizza and so much more.

The debate over who makes the best pizza may never be settled. You be the judge!. ■

Thompson's Pizzeria 734-475-7605

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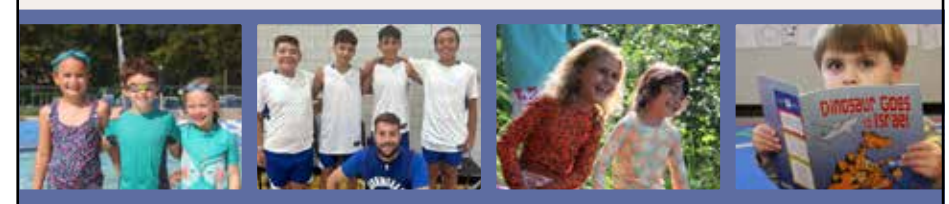

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Jewish Federation

Protests at the Nahalal Junction

Haviva Ner-David and Grace Sherman interviewed by Michael Appel

Haviva Ner-David and Grace Sherman live in the Jezreel Valley region of northern Israel and are active in the Israeli protest movement. When I learned of their regular presence at the Tzomet Nahalal (Nahalal Junction) protest site, I reached out to interview them. Moshav Nahalal is known to quite a few Ann Arborites because the local Federation sponsors a partnership relationship with the community, including a yearly student exchange with middle schoolers.

Grace lives in Moshav Nahalal with her husband and two younger children and has two older children from a previous marriage who live independently nearby. She has been a Nahalal resident for 11 years. Professionally, she is a personal trainer and surfing instructor. Rabbi Dr. Ner-David, who has orthodox rabbinic ordination, lives in Kibbutz Hanaton with her husband and two younger children, and has five older children who live independently elsewhere. She is responsible for the mikveh owned and managed by Hanaton, the only mikveh in Israel open to all to immerse as they choose. Haviva is also a spiritual companion and a writer who has published memoirs, novels, and a children's book about mikveh.

This interview was edited for clarity and length.

Michael: The current series of protests has progressed from resisting judicial reform, to opposing the government coalition, to bringing home the hostages, to ending the war in Gaza, to a response to the war with Iran. Can you describe your participation in the protests in Israel?

Grace: I was never a supporter of Bibi and always voted the other way. However, when he was elected again, I let the democratic process take its place without resisting. I started protesting when the intentions of the government became clear — Bibi's weakness and dependence on fringe Kahanist and messianic parties with commitments to limit democratic freedoms and expand both Jewish dominance and settlements. I started just by standing with a sign in local protests but soon found myself on the microphone speaking. Then, after October 7, which hit my husband and I so hard, we went to the UK to be with family for six months. During that time, Israel saw very little protests, mostly because of the shock of what happened. Six months in, I found that I couldn't stay in the UK knowing what was happening in Israel and how the corrupt government is willing to sacrifice the hostages, and I made my way back to fight the government and demand hostages be returned. Since then, I have become one of a team of seven leaders who are leading the protests for Emek Yizrael (Jezreel Valley).

Haviva: I have been an activist all my life. My earlier activism was feminist-oriented, whereas now it's focused on Palestinian-Jewish partnership work, as that is what feels most urgent to me at this time. But since this government came into power, I have also been focused on resisting this government, which sometimes overlaps with the partnership work and sometimes doesn't.

I have been involved in the protests since the first week this coalition was formed. I heard a demonstration was taking place in Haifa on Saturday night, and I went. The next week, we, Standing Together (an Israeli grassroots social change movement based on Palestinian-Jewish partnership), had a big protest in Tel Aviv. It was a true Arab-Jewish partnership collaboration, and thousands of people came. I was so energized! I have been involved in Standing Together for the past six years or so, but even before that I was very involved in shared society work.

Then, the next Saturday night, more centrist and Jewish-centered protests be-

gan — the ones with the Israeli flags as the symbol. I am not saying this is a bad thing. It made sense in terms of trying to get out the largest number of people possible. And it was a smart symbol to use — taking back the flag — so that no one could say these were just a bunch of anti-Israel traitors who hate the country anyway. But this did push away Arab (or Palestinian) Israelis who would have wanted to be involved. I wish the leaders had reached out a hand to partner with Palestinian Israelis and Druze and Bedouin from the beginning. There was also even some antagonism towards people who came with messages against the occupation and the Nation-State Law at the beginning. But slowly, not only were we accepted, but over time, our messages became the messages from the podium. I heard more and more speakers speak against the occupation and against the Nation-State Law, for example. And more and more Arab (some who identify as Palestinian and some who don't) speakers were invited. It was quite amazing.

And then came October 7 and everything stopped short. After a few weeks, demonstrations began in Caesarea, where Netanyahu lived most of the time then. These were very angry protests, condemning Netanyahu for October 7 and demanding that he resign or be impeached. Demonstrations for the hostages began early, too. It took longer for the big anti-government demonstrations in Tel Aviv to start again. I think one reason is that there were so many reservists involved. And because the leaders were involved in helping the victims of October 7 and the displaced, filling in where the government was being dysfunctional.

I go at least once a week to demonstrate, but often more than once a week. I protest all over, but mostly in local protests. I was going every Saturday night to Tel Aviv. Then I became the head of the field committee of my Standing Together chapter, and we decided to start standing at the Nahalal and Tivon protests each week with photos of children in Gaza who were killed in this war. I feel this is a calling at the present time, bringing this voice and message to the local protests.

Michael: Can you describe your specific involvement in the protest at Tzomet Nahalal (Nahalal Junction)?

Grace: We are a team of seven and we manage all the protests for this area. This consists of getting speakers to come, all advertising for the citizens of Emek Yizrael. We join forces with other protests like the one against Chikli (a previous Likud MK, who is the current Minister of Diaspora Affairs and lives on Hanaton), and we also take shifts in protesting in Jerusalem in Rehov Aza when needed where the Netanyahus reside. We work in correlation with other protest movements in Israel, but we are also our own movement. We raise money by making and selling apparel to our protestors and that's how we pay for billboard signs and other big projects.

Haviva: As my protesting has become more locally focused in the past months, my path has crossed more with Grace's. And Grace has also been helpful with the protests in Hanaton at Amichai Chikli's house. It has been lovely to find there is much we share in terms of vision and outlook, whereas I had seen the Nahalal protests as too centrist for me. I am still on the left end there, but Grace's welcome, embrace, and encouragement has been a pleasant surprise to me. Grace is a more outspoken leader than I am. I am a more quiet activist. I do a lot, and write a lot about it, but I rarely speak at protests, even those at Chikli's house. But I have also become an organizer. Grace is a powerhouse.

Michael: Haviva, I know you are also very involved in protesting Amichai Chikli, a right-wing government minister.

Haviva: I have a neighbor, a member of my kibbutz, Hanaton, who is the Minister of Diaspora Affairs, Amichai Chikli. And he is not a quiet minister. He is very vocal in his extreme right-wing views and can be quite offensive and in-your-face about them. I am part of a small group of Hanaton residents (some also kibbutz members) who protest regularly in front of his house. We try to have a presence there, actually every day now. I was there protesting twice today, in fact. I live so close to his house, so if I can manage it, I go out and join when someone else is standing there. My involvement in these protests began way back before the war, during the anti-government judicial reform period. A man in the area, Yisrael Boker, organized and initiated those protests — every Friday near Chikli's house. These were loud protests, with megaphones and whistles. At first, I did not join them. It felt uncomfortable to protest in my neighborhood and in front of a neighbor. But then I began to feel bad, when I saw how people were coming from over half an hour away, and there I was, living right there. I wanted to support their efforts, so I started going to these protests.

Then October 7 happened and the war started, and these protests stopped. Two months later, in early December, a man from a nearby town started coming every Friday with an Israeli flag and a sign and standing in front of Amichai Chikli's house. Alone. The police would come and tell him he had to move, but he came back week after week. Finally, December 2023, a few of us decided to stand with him, so that when the police came, we could tell them he is with us, we live here, and we have every right to stand on a sidewalk in our neighborhood.

Michael: Can you say a bit about the dynamics of protesting in a small community? How has it affected you and your family?

Grace: For me in Nahalal, being a leader of the protest movement does feel like it may have set me apart from many others. I find myself frustrated at people who don't step up to the hour and are going about their lives as if all is well. When people aren't feeling the urgency that I feel and choose the path of silence,

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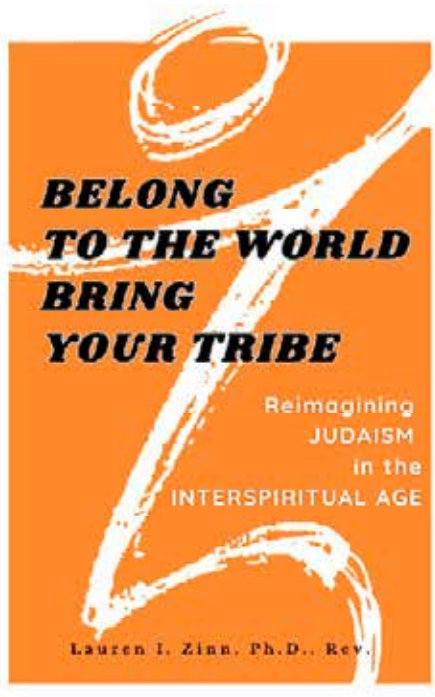
Feature

Growing with God

By Lauren Zinn, special to the WJN

This is the third installment of a series from Lauren Zinn's book, Belong to the World, Bring Your Tribe: Reimagining Judaism in the Interspiritual Age.



I tried not to say it. I tried to use a synonym to avoid uttering the one word that might cause my student's grandfather to walk out of the High Holiday service I was leading. I failed.

As soon as I said "God," Bob (z"l) stood up and walked out. While his behavior was not new to my student and his family, it was to me. Bob did not believe in God. He had reasons that were rational and a story that was personal. He could not tolerate The Name.

I learned that I cannot assume to know what God means to others, and that I needed to investigate further what God meant to me. Who/What is God?

My beliefs about God had changed over time. I believed in God as a child because I was told to. This God was outside of me. When President John F. Kennedy, Jr., died, I looked into the night sky and believed he was with God. Up there. Far away and still near. Then, I thought God was in things, like nature, down here. When our dog was lost, I asked God for help through a rock. I trusted God would intervene. (Lo and behold, I found our dog.) When God didn't fix our family's problems, I lost faith. How could God let bad things happen to me, my family, my tribe, and others? Since God forgot me, I forgot God. But not really, as this memory shows:

When I signed up to live and work on a religious kibbutz in the state of Israel, bad things had not yet happened to my family. By the time I arrived, they had. With no moorings, I sat in my dorm room smoking a filterless cigarette … on Shabbat. I was rebelling as I outgrew the childhood concept of "an old, white-bearded man in the sky watching over us." (Actually, my image of God was a young man in a tuxedo, bigger than the universe and with a ghost's tail flying around the earth. It was drawn in pencil on lined paper.)

As my lifelong yearning for spirituality got louder, I looked around. Soon, I studied a form of Hinduism based on advaita vedanta (nondual) philosophy, chanted daily from the Bhagavad Gita, waved Arati lights, read the Mahabharata, learned meditation and yoga, cooked and ate in a Guru-led spiritual community, and co-led its weekly children's program. The image for my Hindu period is this:

I am sitting on a cushion in a large hall full of people, all of whom are also sitting on cushions, draped in wool prayer shawls, as we chant a mantra and meditate. The Guru glides through the hall, brushing us with a giant peacock feather to initiate the spiritual transmission of energy from realized teacher to student, aka Shaktipat, an uncoiling of energy at the base of the spine that shoots to the crown.

Through many ashram retreats, I learned about God as knower and known, seer and seen, consciousness beyond the limitations of this world. *In God is Everything: The Radical Path of Nondual Judaism,* rabbi and scholar Jay Michaelson explains Vedanta through the words of Vivekananda, "You, as body, mind, or soul, are a dream, but what you really are, is Existence, Knowledge, Bliss. You are the God of this universe. You are creating the whole universe and drawing it in" (p. 80). In other words, we are all God. There is no separation.

According to Vedanta, we long for nondual experience because when we feel separated from God, we know it's not natural. It's not natural because it's an illusion. But, says Rupert Spira, thinking it's real, "... the separate self or ego is prone to vulnerability and insecurity and thus seeks to defend itself … inclined to feel unconfident, inferior and unloved … it seeks to aggrandize itself … it seeks fulfillment through the acquisition of objects, substances, activities, states of mind, or relationships …" Like in Buddhist teaching, it is the attachment to things that causes suffering.

The nondual philosophy of Vedanta inspired me on my spiritual journey, but the Hindu community I joined was not sustainable. I came down from the proverbial mountaintop to apply its lessons in the world. It is one thing to become one with God in a universe that is illusory (acosmism) and another to be devoted to God in a universe that is a manifestation of God. In other words, as Jay Michaelson notes in Vivekananda's *Gospel of Ramakrishna,* if you're a devotee in the world and not on the mountaintop, then what you want is to eat sugar, not to become sugar *(God is Everything, p*. 134).

A dream came next. In the dream, I hovered over a Torah service, all in Hebrew, not my native tongue. This led me to visit a friend in Jerusalem. There, in the dark of night, I spoke silently, from my heart to God. "God, why aren't You with me?" I did not expect an answer, let alone one before I finished the question. "Why aren't you with Me?" (The emphasis was on different words.) I felt an electric charge and an invitation to rediscover my Jewish roots. The irony, of course, is that the answer revealed the fallacy of the question. God is always with us. Having found mysticism in Hinduism, I trusted I'd find it in Judaism. So I joined a Hasidic study group.

In an all-women's Hasidic study group, I could not get enough of Judaism's mystical teachings, or Kabbalah. Torah came alive with layers of interpretation and meaningful engagement with the text. Soon, I wrote my own midrashim (interpretations) and I devoted time to learning how to chant the Torah. In the Jewish Hasidic movement of the Ba'al Shem Tov (1698–1760), I found nondual Judaism. It is not automatically taught or passed on. Eventually, I left Hasidism. Its treatment of women, disdain for gentiles, lack of interest in non-Jewish teachings, sense of superiority in the Jewish community, and condemnation of interfaith marriage kept me left out, despite neo-Hasidic claims of Oneness.

Lauren Zinn

In Hinduism, the insistence that life is an illusion hits you on the head from the get go. In Judaism, nondualism has to be pulled out. God is both near and far, imminent and transcendent. Rabbi Rami Shapiro cites the book of Isaiah to describe this experience. "Peace, peace to the one who is far and the one who is near" (Isaiah 57:19). In his book, *Zen Mind, Jewish Mind,* Shapiro explains the verse as follows: "The 'one who is far' experiences God as transcendent. The 'one who is near' experiences God as immanent. Both seekers, having found God, will find peace, but not the same peace. The peace of the first is experienced as awe. The peace of the second is experienced as love. A complete peace … comes only to those who experience the nondual Divine that embraces both far and near. Their peace is the blending of awe and love" (p. 70).

It was validating to find a nondual path of Judaism which is also found in other religions and usually referred to as mysticism. In the Interspiritual Age, the nondualism of our religions are appreciated for their similarities and differences. It is worth noting Jay Michaelson's take on Judaism's approach to nondualism. Traditional Jewish sources, he says, usually depict nonduality from the top down — beginning with an infinite God and moving to the consequences — rather than bottom up, deriving insights from experience and then working our way 'up' from there. Says Michaelson, "... to start with God is to start from an unproven, uncertain, and highly debatable premise … the word 'God' carries … all sorts of associations that have nothing to do with the nondual view: a character who acts in history, for example, or has some special reaction to prayer or ethics or ritual."

Returning to my student's grandfather Bob, it is my suspicion that the Jewish pedagogy in Bob's upbringing turned him off. What if he had learned about God from the bottom up rather than the top down? Would his experience have been different?

Long before Bob, I knew religious liturgy and pedagogy left many people feeling excluded. Me, too. No wonder so many of my peers left Judaism and many others left religion. I*n Zen Mind, Jewish Mind,* Rabbi Rami Shapiro writes, "I haven't prayed in synagogue in years. I find the liturgy too wordy, the service too long, and the need to translate the dualism inherent in the prayers into the nondualism of my experience too exhausting" (p. 95). I agree. We could all benefit from revisions to our liturgy by allowing the words to speak to people with different experiences.

How we innovate with prayer, however, requires care. Rabbi Rami Efal once advised me not to go too far with changing the words of prayers to suit modern sensibilities. In doing so, he said, I would be playing with the "erasure of our ancestors." Thus, new versions of Jewish liturgy are often presented as optional additions, not replacements. But we can honor both dual and nondual experiences of God. In an interview with Daniel Epstein, creator of Portraits in Faith, Rabbi Tirzah Firestone speaks to the meaning she finds in a sacred "I-Thou" relationship with God (a dualist model) while also recognizing and knowing that everything is One/echad, that nothing is not Spirit. (Her memoir, *With Roots in Heaven,* is a testimony to the individual journeys we are all on as we evolve with and through our religions.) Thus, as we honor our ancestors by including their versions of prayers, versions that tend to reflect dualism, we must also prepare for our descendants. From an evolutionary perspective, the future has a voice. The future is interspiritual and nondual experience is part of it.

In short, my brief review of different concepts and experiences of God mirrors the collective. According to Jay Michaelson, Rabbi Zalman Shachter-Shalomi claimed, "... we have moved past the stage of deism which he associates with ein aroch (there is

Continued on page 15

Belonging to the World continued from page 14

no measurement to God) and even past theism (ein zulatecha, there is no God besides You) and into monism (efes blitecha, there is nothing besides You)" (p. 138). As we evolve, so does God. Rabbi Rami Shapiro explains in *Zen Mind, Jewish Mind* that, "When the prophet Malachi hears YHVH say, 'I am YHVH, I do not change,' we should understand YHVH to be saying, 'I am YHVH. I do not change because I am change'" (p. 69). As God changes, so do we.

One way to nudge our religions into their next stage of evolutionary growth, the Interspiritual Age, is to welcome different theologies of God and Not-God within our traditions as well as alongside those of other religions, and let them speak to each other. In listening, we might learn and grow, with God and Not-God, through dualism and nondualism, through the spiritual and interspiritual. The next time I was to lead a High Holiday service, I would be prepared. ■

US Sabra and Shatilla continued from page 5

country. Beginning in August 1948, the First Republic of Korea conducted an "eradication campaign" leading to the deaths of between 14,000 and 30,000 people. The "Jeju Uprising" (as it is also known) was officially censored in South Korea for decades, but in 2000 the government set up a National Committee for Investigation of the Truth About Jeju. In October 2003, the Committee released its comprehensive report, and subsequently, South Korean President Roh Moo-hyun issued an official state apology for the government's role in the massacre (in 2018, President Moon Jae-in issued another apology). The Committee found too that the United States bore some responsibility for the killings, as these began while South Korea was still under the rule of the U.S. Military Government. Like the Israeli military in Sabra and Shatila, the U.S. military did not do enough in Jeju to prevent the killing of innocent civilians.

What's to be learned by the fact that America has a "Sabra and Shatila" in its past? If a shared human goal is tikkun olam, repairing a broken world, one thing to learn is how much work can and needs to be done right here in America. What, for example, has prevented America from establishing a State Commission to investigate the Jeju Uprising, just like the Koreans did and just like the Israelis earlier did for Sabra and Shatila? There is certainly a place for America's voice in the world, but there's no question about it: America's "Sabra and Shatila" does suggest that any American who wishes to engage in international affairs should first swallow down a healthy dose of humility.

Teddy Weinberger, Ph.D., made aliyah in 1997 from Miami, where he was an assistant professor of religious studies at Florida International University. He has been writing a bi-weekly column on life in Israel for the past 27 years. He lives with his wife Sarah Jane Ross in Ra'anana. Teddy and Sarah have 5 children and 8 grandchildren. .■

The album (which includes a booklet with lyrics in Yiddish and English, notes on the songs, and artist bios) is available now to download and stream, and CDs and printed booklets are available to order, at: lidermitpalestine.bandcamp.com. All proceeds from the album will go to Gaza Birds Singing, a project born during the genocide that teaches and supports children in Gaza with the life-giving power of music.

Protest at Nahalal Junction continued from page 13

especially people who are in the local committee and can use their power to get things on the table, I find it very difficult. I have on occasion made my frustrations clear in the community WhatsApp groups and have received a lot of negative responses and backlash. In Nahalal the majority doesn't approve of the government, but people also try not to ruffle feathers, always choosing the easy and polite option which in times such as these does have a tendency to make me very frustrated.

Haviva: It has been very hard in Hanaton for us protesters. Most residents do not join our protests, for a variety of reasons. Mostly, people are against the idea of protesting inside the kibbutz. They think all politics should be left outside the yellow gate. Even if they agree that Chikli is very problematic and that this government is catastrophic, they prioritize what they call "Shalom Bayit," peace in the home. Whereas we see the situation as so drastic, such an emergency, that it is worthwhile — in fact imperative — to disrupt the community's quiet and peace.

Hadas, Amichai's spouse, has also been very proactive in trying to turn other kibbutz members against us, including the secretariat, who have taken various steps to try and silence us and/or prevent our protests. They sent out a letter to the community saying harsh things against us and forbidding us from hanging signs in public areas or writing with sidewalk chalk on the street. Whenever someone joins our protests, Hadas comes out to yell at them, or she invites them to meet with her so she can convince them not to return. It reached a point where neighbors are not speaking to one another and send angry WhatsApp messages in the community group back and forth.

One member of our protest group dropped out because her daughter's friends were making fun of her because of her mother's activity and saying nasty things about her. This protester was in distress about the whole situation and stopped her involvement, whereas before she was a main force behind the protests.

About six weeks ago, an article about the whole controversy was published in the national newspaper, Haaretz. The silence in the community about it was obvious. The community organizer of the kibbutz sent our group a message inviting us for a discussion, writing that rather than go to a third party [the newspaper] if we have a complaint, we should come to her and the secretariat. We wrote back that the reporter came to us, and we have no intention of coming to speak with her and the secretariat unless we have a guarantee they will not treat us like they have in the past.

Lately, after more and more one-on-one discussions with people as they pass by or even come out to tell us to stop protesting, we feel we have gained more support — just a few more people every once in a while. Still, there is progress, we think. We feel the situation is so urgent that even things that might disturb or upset people are acceptable.

Michael: At least twice — after October 7 and during the war with Iran — most if not all of the protests were halted. Can you speak about how these events impacted you, your family, your safety, and your community? And how did they impact the approach to protesting?

Grace: October 7 impacted me on so many levels. Beyond being traumatized from having it live streamed to us, I was appalled at the magnitude of it and also felt like I had failed personally in preventing it. I had stood for so long warning about the war I felt was coming due to the corruption of the government and the judicial coup, I saw what it did to divide the people and the country, and I felt like all that protesting, all those signs, it didn't help. I felt powerless against the system and that I had failed all those victims and the hostages. I couldn't wrap my head around the colossal failure, and I had to leave to regroup. I wanted to hide anywhere with my two young children, hide them from the Hamas terror regime and from the Israeli government terror regime.

I felt we had all been pawns of two corrupt regimes out to get more power and land in the name of extreme ideology. The protests halted completely and I was submerged in deep mourning in London where the weather suited my mood. Six months later I realized that we're going to have to fight to bring home the hostages as the government has every intention of using the situation for political survival. So we came back to Israel and started protesting again trying to bring people back into action. We've been protesting since. It's like a beating heart, sometimes it falters and less people show up and sometimes it beats strong and heavy with lots of people coming and fighting to bring home the hostages, to stop the war and the senseless killing of civilians.

The campaign against Iran also brought the protests to a halt and people were in and out of safe rooms. Me and my family were on a visit to the UK when it started so we got stuck there. Protests renewed as soon as that was over. The Iran campaign really showed the government in its worst as the coalition was hiding with their families in bunkers and the citizens were left to fend for themselves after budgets have been cut so significantly that many people had to rely on protest movement initiatives to turn underground parking lots into bunkers. Now more than ever we understand that it is up to us to save the country and that the protests are also civil movements in times of need and have an imperative job in the future of Israel.

Michael: I'm eager to know your thoughts about how folks in the U.S. — particularly Jews who want to support your efforts in Israel — can be of support to you and/or to the protests more generally?

Grace: I think more than anything we need to know that the Jews of the diaspora see themselves as a part of Israel and in that respect they too have to protest and fight against this extreme Kahanist government. If Israel is an extreme state then Jews of the diaspora aren't safe either from hatred and antisemitism. The fate of all Jews all over the world is intertwined and this is not just an Israeli problem, this is very much a Jewish problem that we as Jews have to come together to solve. I would like to see more and more Jews protest this corrupt government wherever they live and stand with Israelis in the understanding that Israel must be a democracy and we must find a diplomatic solution for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Their and our fate is also woven together. This must take place for the sake of all of us. ■

August events at Beth Israel

Everyone is welcome to join Beth Israel for services, classes, and events. Services are being held in person and virtually, unless otherwise noted on the calendar. Below is a list of the links to participate virtually in services at Beth Israel. Beth Israel is live streaming services on the Beth Israel YouTube channel (Beth Israel Congregation AA MI). All links are also available on the Beth Israel homepage (www.bethisrael-aa.org). Please note that passwords are used. Contact the office to get the passwords at office@bethisrael-aa.org.

Tisha B'Av at Beth Israel

Saturday, August 2, at 9:45 p.m. – Erev Tisha B'Av
Sunday, August 3, at 9:30 a.m. – Tisha B'Av Morning Service
Sunday, August 3, at 2:30 p.m. – Tisha B'Av Minchah
Tisha B'Av is the saddest day on the Jewish calendar — the anniversary of the destruction of both temples in Jerusalem, when we also commemorate other tragedies like the expulsions of Jews from England and from Spain. We observe Tisha B'Av with a full fast from sunset to sunset. During evening and morning services, we chant the biblical book of Eichah (Lamentations), traditionally attributed to the prophet Jeremiah, who wrote it in the aftermath of the destruction of the First Temple in 586 BCE.

Shabbat in the Park
Friday, August 8, at 6 p.m.
Join Beth Israel for our annual Shabbat in the Park at the Southeast Pavilion (note the new location). Bring your own picnic and enjoy Shabbat dinner with fellow congregants. The evening starts with dinner at 6 p.m. followed by Kabbalat Shabbat services. After services, take a tour of the BIC community garden and hear a presentation from the Green Team.

Aura of Kabbalat Shabbat
Friday, August 15, at 6 p.m.
A Jewish Renewal-inspired singing service led by Rabbi Aura Ahuvia. The choir, dubbed the "Holy Levites," will be holding a rehearsal at 5:30 p.m. leading right up to and seamlessly into services. All are welcome to attend.

Torah Reading 202 — More Common Mistakes Experienced Torah Readers Make with Jerry Sorokin
Saturday, August 16, at 12:15 p.m.
In this follow-up to Zachary Bernstein's class last summer, Jerry will share further tips on accuracy and precision in Torah reading. Even experience and skilled Torah readers make mistakes or have nuances of Torah reading to learn! Jerry will review five of the most common mistakes that even good Torah readers make, so that you can read with more precision and confidence. This session is open to anyone, but the ability to read Hebrew with trope will be presumed. Contact Melanie Gorman with questions at mgorman@bethisrael-aa.org.

Tot Shabbat
Saturday, August 23, at 11 a.m.
Tot Shabbat is for children through first grade and is held in the Krickstein Youth Library. This session will be led by Katie Shelef.

End of Summer BBQ and Service
Friday, August 29, at 5:30 p.m.
Join Beth Israel as we welcome everyone back from summer. Enjoy games and a bounce house in the backyard beginning at 5:30 p.m. A hot dog and veggie dog dinner is served at 6 p.m. on the courtyard followed by Kabbalat Shabbat services at 7 p.m. Registration is on the BIC website and is required for the dinner. No registration is needed for attending the service. Come and celebrate the end of summer with us.

Theology Book Club — Online
Wednesdays at 7 p.m.
Beth Israel Congregation's Theology Book Club welcomes you to join them to read together and discuss books on Jewish thought and beliefs. The books are in English. Contact Paul Shifrin at (248) 514-7276 for more information.

In Person and Online Services

Minyan
Sundays at 9:30 a.m. in the M&M Chapel and online
Sunday–Thursday at 7:45 p.m. online only

Friday Evening Services — in person and virtual
Kabbalat Shabbat Service at 6 p.m.

Shabbat Morning Services — in person and virtual
Saturdays at 9:30 a.m. ■

Temple Beth Emeth events in August

Events and services are both in person and/or virtual. Please see www.templebethemeth.org for full details, location information, and links.

Wine & Cheese Shabbat Reception
Fridays at 6 p.m. (except for the second Friday of each month)

Lay-led Shabbat Service
Fridays at 6:30 p.m.

Shabbat morning Torah study
Saturdays at 9:30 a.m.
Join us for this weekly discussion of the Torah portion.

Weekday morning blessings
Weekdays at 9:15 a.m.
Join TBE lay leaders each weekday morning for a short service of song, poetry, and meditation.

Twenty-five-minute mindfulness with Jewish spiritual director Linda Greene
Tuesdays at 8:30 a.m.
Zoom room opens at 8:15 a.m. for optional check-in. Blessing and intention setting 8:30–8:35 a.m. Meditate 8:35–9 a.m. Start your day centered and connected.

Queer Torah Study
Tuesdays at 7 p.m.
Join us in person or via Zoom for a discussion of queer themes in the weekly Torah portion! Led by Ari Marcotte & Ari Smith. Guest leaders welcome! Contact Ari M (ari.j.marcotte@gmail.com) for more information.

Back Door Food Pantry
Thursdays, 4 to 7 p.m.

Meditation with Claire Weiner
Thursdays at 5 p.m.
Join Claire Weiner for a 40-minute meditation session.

Weekly Mahj
Tuesdays at 7:30 p.m.
Wednesdays at 12:30 p.m.

WTBE Gift Shop Open
Friday at 5:30 p.m.
Washtenaw County's only Judaica Shop!

Renaissance Group Mud Hens
Sunday, August 3, at 4 p.m.

Coping with Chronic Illness and Pains
Tuesday, August 5, at 4 p.m.

WTBE Tour of Cranbrook
Sunday, August 10, at 10 a.m.

WTBE Historical Novel Reading Group
Wednesday, August 13, at 1 p.m.

LGBTQ Shabbat Potluck
Friday, August 15, at 5:30 p.m.

Bereavement Group
Tuesday, August 19, at 4 p.m.
The group will have opportunities to share openly about their process of grieving and will also have topic-based readings to spark discussion.

TBE Annual Picnic
Friday, August 24, at 11 a.m. ■

August Calendar

Always check websites or call for updates before planning to attend anything listed here and for prayer services.

Friday 1
Candle Lighting 8:36 p.m.

Saturday 2 Devarim, Erev Tisha b'Av
Havdallah 9:40 p.m.

Sunday 3 Tisha b'Av (Ninth of Av)

Wednesday 6
Yidish tish: (Virtual) (Yiddish Conversation & Reading Group): Zoom. About 45 minutes each of conversation and reading. Free and open to all those interested in Yiddish language, literature, and culture, no matter what level of proficiency. For more information, to get the link, and to make certain that we are meeting on a specific day, please email Elliot H. Gertel at egertel@umich.edu at least one day before scheduled meeting day every Wednesday (except major Jewish holidays). 2:00 p.m.

Friday 8
Candle Lighting 8:27 p.m.

Saturday 9 Va'etchanan
Havdallah 9:30 p.m.

Monday 11
JCC 10th Annual Golf Outing.

Wednesday 13
Yidish tish: (Virtual) (Yiddish Conversation & Reading Group, see above): Zoom. 2:00 p.m.

Friday 15
Candle Lighting 8:17 p.m.

Saturday 16 Eikev
Havdallah 9:19 p.m.

Sunday 17
Shinshinim Farewell Party. 10:30 a.m.
The Network: Jewish People of Color of Greater Ann Arbor Annual Picnic. Bring a vegetarian dish to share. Contact greenedm@umich.edu to register. Noon.

Tuesday 19
JCRC: Washtenaw Black Jewish Coalition tour of the Ann Arbor Underground Railroad. 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Friday 22
Candle Lighting 8:06 p.m.

Saturday 23 Re'ev
Havdallah 9:07 p.m.
Garrett's Space Annual Fundraiser. 6-9 p.m.

Sunday 24 Rosh Hodesh Elul
Multicultural Community Carnivale: JCC Music Series. 2 p.m.

Monday 25 Rosh Hodesh Elul
JCLP Annual Welcome Breakfast. 8 a.m.

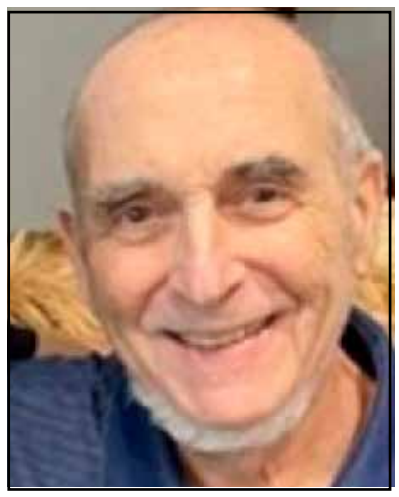
Wednesday 27
Yidish tish: (Virtual) (Yiddish Conversation & Reading Group, see above): Zoom. 2:00 p.m.

Friday 29
Candle Lighting 7:55 p.m.

Saturday 30 Shoftim
Havdallah 8:55 p.m. ■

Obituaries

The WJN prints obituaries, memories, and eulogies free of charge for family members of Washtenaw Jewish community members as a service to the community and to honor the lives of those who have passed away. When local congregations send condolence notices to the WJN, the editor searches for obituaries online. Also, community members are invited to send obituaries to the editor.



Mark Chesler was born October 18, 1936, in Queens, New York, the much-desired only son of a lawyer father and a teacher mother. He graduated from the Queens public school system in 1953, at the age of 16. As part of the ROTC program, Mark earned an undergraduate degree in Industrial and Labor Relations from Cornell University in 1957 and, after a 13-month stint in Korea as an army troop commander of a MASH unit, obtained his MA in Psychology at Hofstra University in 1963 and PhD in Social Psychology at the University of Michigan in 1966. He joined the faculty of the Sociology department at the University of Michigan immediately upon earning his degree and was a professor there for over 50 years.

Mark published seven books and hundreds of articles in two main areas: (1) action-research projects focused on issues of race and gender equity and change in organizations and (2) the psychosocial impact of childhood cancer on patients, survivors, and family members. His other major focus was as a researcher and consultant to companies and universities about how to create diversity and then to thrive with diversity. He helped them appreciate the importance of learning enough about our differences and how to actually use each other's different talents and backgrounds to bring about productive environments. He earned many awards for his research and service, community service learning, and teaching.

Outside of his professional life, he was a loving husband to his wife of over 50 years, Joan, father to his daughters and sons-in-law Deborah (David) and Naomi (Dan), grandfather to Jonathan, Benjamin, Josephine, Amelia, and Ruby, and great-grandfather to Mayson, Liliana, and Lauren. After Joan's death, he was also a loving partner to Nancy. He was an avid tennis player and nature photographer, and in his later years, speed-reader of detective novels, poker player, and euchre player. His family and friends will sorely miss his keen insights, wry humor, and generous spirit.

Shirley Horna Sherman, 89, died on Wednesday June 25, 2025, in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Shirley was born in Chicago, Illinois, the oldest of three daughters of the late Mae and Charles Horna. She wed Jerry Sherman, whom she met at a USO dance in Illinois. After their wedding, Shirley and Jerry eventually settled in New Jersey where they would live for close to 60 years and raise three daughters.

She was preceded in death by her husband of 57 years, Jerry Sherman, and her sister, Joanne Heyman.

She is survived by three daughters, Helayne (Rick), Cynthia (Jeff) and Michelle; seven grandchildren; one great-grandson; her beloved sister, Margaret (John); as well as many nieces, nephews, and great-nieces and -nephews.

Shirley enjoyed a wide variety of interests — travel, gardening, theatre, and music. Giving back to her community was especially important. For years, Shirley volunteered at a local soup kitchen and organized blood drives. She also participated in three 60-mile walks raising money for breast cancer research.

Shirley was a decades-long member of Anshe Emeth Temple and especially loved singing in the choir. She enjoyed working in many administrative positions, and ended her career working for Rutgers University, an institution she deeply loved.

Most important to Shirley was her love for her family. Over the years she has especially cherished the time spent with her seven grandchildren and great grandson.

Shulamith Caine (nee Wechter) died on June 29, 2025. Beloved wife of the late Burton; loving mother of Uri Caine (Janice Galperin), Sara Caine Kornfeld (Tom), and Gidon M. Caine (Leslie); dear sister of Abraham Wechter and Meira Miller; devoted grandmother of Miri, Nomi (Noah), Yael, David, Matthew (Mikkee), Sarah (Michael), Abigail, and Ethan; great-grandmother of Ada, Barak, Lavi, and Jonah. Contributions in her memory may be made to ACLU, www.aclu.org or Perelman Jewish Day School, www.pjds.org

Richard "Dick" Benedek, 91, of Ann Arbor Michigan, died on July 5, 2025. Beloved husband of 67 years of Elissa Panush Benedek. Cherished father of David (Cindy) Benedek, Joel (Tami) Benedek, Sarah (David) Wasson, and Dina (Douglas) Jansen. Treasured grandfather of Kaitie Benedek, Ryan Benedek, Evan Benedek, Jason Benedek, Hanna (Ryan) Burnham, Emma Benedek, and Deedee Jansen. Loving brother of the late Armond (the late Phyllis) Benedek. Dear son of the late Lia and the late Manfred Benedek. Also survived by many other loving relatives.

Richard Elden Weber, MD of Ann Arbor passed away on July 11, 2025. Richard was born on February 3, 1936 in Detroit to the late Randolph and Celina Weber. He is survived by his wife of 63 years, Madelon Klunover Weber, daughter Karen, son Richard II (Jackie) and his adored grandchildren Samson and Rachel. Richard was a devoted empathetic physician and educator. For 25 years he enjoyed his clinical teaching appointment at the University of Michigan medical school while directing clinical drug research at Pfizer in Ann Arbor and then at Upjohn in Kalamazoo. His devotion and deep love for his family will be his legacy. Richard's kindness, selflessness, exceptional sense of humor and abiding love will be greatly missed. ■

Simchas and Sorrows

The Washtenaw Jewish community sends condolences to the families of:

Shirley Sherman, mother of Michelle Sherman, and grandmother to Ethan & Rebecca White. Wednesday, June 25.
Shulamith Caine, sister of Meira Miller and aunt of Shoshanna Wechter and Rabbi Nadav Caine, June 29.
Dick Benedek, husband of Elissa Benedek, July 5.
Edgar Amadeo Carcagno FarFan, father of Mauricio Carcagno, July 4.

The Washtenaw Jewish community sends mazel tovs to:

Leslie and Mark Rosenwasser on their 50th wedding anniversary.
Bonnie Fauman on the marriage of her grandson Charles Fauman to Desirée Noriega on June 7, 2025.
Ted and Wendy Lawrence on the birth of their granddaughter, Zimrah Gloria Hickson-Lawrence. She was born on June 5. Her parents, Meredith Hickson and Rick Lawrence, and her sister, Zipporah, are all excited to have a new member of the family.
Oscar Evans on his bar mitzvah, August 9.
Nathaniel Raz on his bar mitzvah, August 23.
Aziza Nelson and Hannah Mareino on their bnei mitzvah, July 12.

Program supports artists living beyond incarceration

After more than two decades of fostering creativity, connection, and opportunity for artists who are formerly incarcerated, the Linkage Community will officially transition into an independent initiative on August 1, 2025.

Founded as a mentorship program under the University of Michigan's Prison Creative Arts Project (PCAP) in the early 2000s, Linkage has evolved into a statewide, member-driven network supporting artists with lived experience of incarceration. With active members in Detroit, Ann Arbor, Ypsilanti, Flint, and other communities across Michigan, Linkage is now recognized as the state's leading peer-based creative reentry network.

"Linkage provides me with a platform to give a voice to those who are unable to speak because of incarceration," said Johnny Van Patten, a Lansing-based visual artist and founding Linkage member.

On August 1, Linkage will begin operating independently under a fiscal sponsor, marking its departure from PCAP and the University of Michigan. The move provides autonomy to shape programming and set strategic direction, all while maintaining a collaborative relationship with PCAP.

"This transition is a testament to the creativity, vision, and leadership of Linkage members themselves," said Nora Kritinsky, Director of the Prison Creative Arts Project. "We're honored to have supported their growth and excited to continue working together in new ways."

Linkage Community members co-create programming that fosters emotional wellness, artistic growth, peer navigation, and economic mobility. The network also provides holistic support and resource-sharing for individuals as they build lives after incarceration. Pillars of programming include:

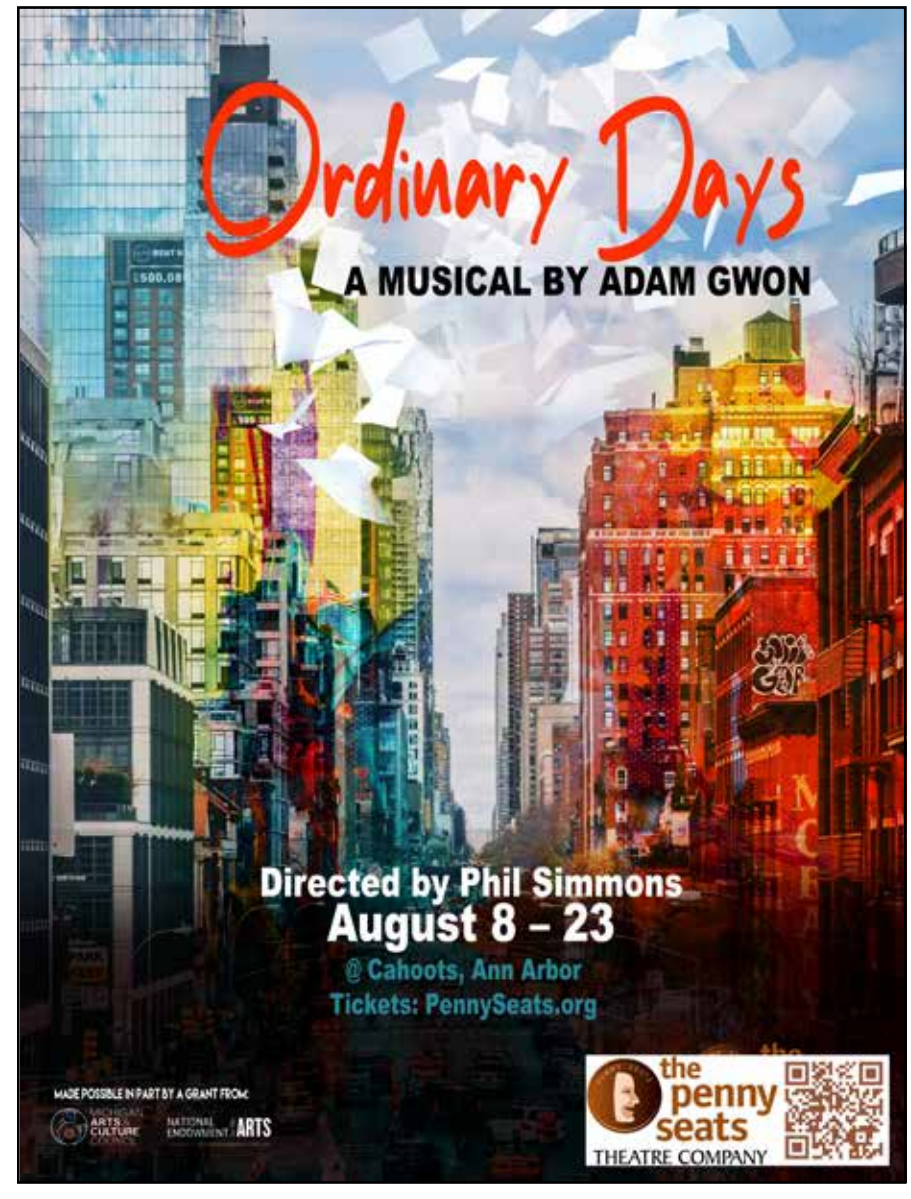
Belonging: "Welcome to Linkage" meals, one-on-one check-ins, in-person and virtual gatherings, weekly newsletter

Bridging Gaps: Personalized referrals to social services, travel support for in-person events, pre-entry parole board support, technology coaching, free digitization of artwork

Development: Exhibitions and performances, in-person intensives and trainings, project consultations, free art supplies, professional introductions

A send-off fundraising campaign is underway to ensure a strong launch. Supporters can contribute at https://myumi.ch/VVDdV. Funds will help establish a sustainable foundation and ensure Linkage continues to welcome artists home from prison into a supportive and vibrant creative community.

"At its core, it's a network of people with lived experience of incarceration who believe in dignity, in each other, and in the power of creativity," said Casey Ward, a creative writer, entrepreneur, and valued Linkage member. "We've made something rare: a circle where people are truly seen. Not for what they've been through, but for what they bring — their art, their insight, their care." ■



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